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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

THE FAILURE OF THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT.

In many minds the co-operative movement as it exists to-day is associated with Socialism and the struggle to overthrow the Capitalist system of society. In continental countries it is customary for the trade unions, the co-operatives, and the "Labour" parties to work in very close contact, and it is vaguely understood that their joint aim is "Socialism." In fact, their unity is only possible, because the so-called Labour Parties are actually concerned not with the abolition, but only with the reform of Capitalism.

When English co-operators speak in this strain they have some apparent justification in the fact that Robert Owen, whom they usually claim as the pioneer of co-operative principles, did during part of his life actively preach to the workers the necessity of finding means of escape from Capitalism. Owen lived in an age when machine production in factories was first making its brutal way in England. A new era was opening, an era of amazing profits for the fortunate few and of almost incredible suffering for the masses. He saw that the workers were helplessly enslaved to the owners of the land and the factories, and he thought that he had discovered a way out. If to labour in another man's factory or on another man's land meant hideous poverty for the labourer, then surely the remedy lay in securing land and machinery for the labourers to work themselves. So far it was sound enough, but Owen soon had to realise two things. The first was that the then ruling class had no need to solve the poverty problems of the workers, and certainly did not intend to give up freely their own right to own and to live by owning. The second was that at that time when the workers were unedu-

cated, voteless and unorganised, it was unthinkable that they could hope to obtain possession of the wealth of the country against the opposition of their political rulers. In due course, therefore, Owen announced his solution.

He proposed that small groups of workers should aim at establishing self-supporting "villages of industry" in which there should be no employer, no master—little oases in the desert of Capitalism. They were to own the "land and means of production in common," and it was anticipated that the idea would spread, until finally the workers would all have achieved their emancipation.

The initial difficulty, of obtaining the necessary capital, was to be overcome by the formation of "union shops" which would buy goods wholesale and sell them to the members at retail prices. A surplus would accumulate in the hands of the society which would otherwise have gone into the pockets of shopkeepers. Then, in due course the fund would be used for the setting up of "villages of industry."

Between 1825 and 1834 some 400 or 500 of such shops were started, but the whole movement turned out a failure. They failed chiefly because enthusiasm waned with time, and there was no other attraction to secure the continued loyalty of the members once they lost faith in the ultimate end. In addition it was difficult, if not impossible, owing to the existing law for a body of workers to secure protection for their funds.

In 1826 one such store was formed in Brighton, and it is suggested in the co-operative "People's Year Book" (1926, p. 13) that 1926 should on that account be celebrated as the centenary year of the

movement. The writer in the Year Book says of the Brighton co-operative store that in it "the co-operative movement had definitely started on the lines still followed more or less closely by every consumer's co-operative society now existing in the world." In his opinion, however, even so early as that, the pioneer co-operators at Brighton and elsewhere had already lost their interest in the more ambitious and far-reaching plans of Robert Owen: "The schemes of Owen were as much unlike the aims of the first co-operative societies as chalk is unlike cheese."

But whatever may have been their intentions the shops founded by the early co-operators in England did not prosper, and it was a renewed effort in 1844 at Rochdale which contained the novel feature which was to lead to the modern developments.

The Rochdale innovation was the "dividend on purchases." This provided a permanent inducement to members to remain loyal irrespective of their views on the desirability of reforming society. Great and growing numbers of workers have thus been drawn into the co-operative movement until to-day it is claimed that in Great Britain there are nearly 5,000,000 members, with £140,000,000 share and loan capital and an annual surplus of over £21,000,000.

In face of these imposing figures, and in view of the continued expansion of the movement, how can we seriously speak of co-operation as a failure?

It is a failure because it has not, will not, and cannot, solve the basic economic problems of the working-class. Owen saw, even if he failed to realise all its implications, that the dominance of capital was the root evil. He sought a means of escape, but although the modern co-operators praise him, they have long ago abandoned the intention of carrying on the work he planned.

"Union shops" were to be a means to an end. The co-operative movement has made "divi-hunting" an end in itself. The funds accumulated in the shops were to be used for the foundation of societies in which all the members would co-operate in working their own property held in common and share the proceeds on a footing of equality. The modern movement accumulates funds for the purpose of making further profit out of the employment of wage-workers.

The one, utopian though it was, aimed at abolishing the wages systems, private ownership and profit-making. The other merely aims at redirecting the stream of profits from the private trader to the co-operative members. It has not and cannot solve the poverty problem either of its members or of its employees.

The basic fallacy in the co-operative idea is a wrong explanation of rent, interest and profit. Yet the position is simplicity itself to all who have missed or have won through the haze of mystery shed by the professional economists. Because the means of production—land, factories, steamships, etc.—are privately owned, the workers who wish to operate these instruments must first enter into a one-sided bargain; one-sided because the goad of semi-starvation forces their hand. They bargain to produce wealth for the owners of capital and receive as the price of the energies they sell wages or salaries which, over the whole field of Capitalism, are only a small proportion of the values they produce. What the Capitalists get is a property-income, something which arises from their monopoly and not from their services, and which varies according to the size of their capital. Rent, interest and profit, if the terms are cleared of some looseness which surrounds their common use, are merely names for this income which goes to the owners of property because they are owners.

Co-operators want to eliminate the middleman and redirect the flow of profit—but what is profit? Profit is the child of private ownership and is obtained by the exploitation of the workers. Co-operative "divi" is derived from the exploitation of the co-operative employees. The relation between the latter and the societies is precisely the same as that between other workers and their employers.

Owen wanted to eliminate capitalist ownership. The extent to which this could be done by the co-operative movement is illustrated not by the fact that it has five million members, who with their families make up perhaps a third of the population, but by the contrast between the numbers it employs and the total number of wage-earners. It employed in 1924 about 200,000 persons out of about 16 million workers in Great Britain. Its employees were only 4.16 per cent. of the whole number of its members, and that percentage was actually

less than the 1914 figure of 4.85 per cent. Its capital looks large, but against the great mass of capital in the hands of the Capitalist class it is insignificant.

The co-operative movement has all the trappings but none of the substance of success. Its members are still wage-earners, still exploited by the Capitalist class and still, therefore, poor; its employees are in the same condition. If the societies as at present constituted extend until they cover the whole working-class that will still be true.

It has made no inroads into the Capitalist system, and it could not if it would. As the *Scottish Co-operator* pointed out (23.8.23.) the movement was then weaker than it had been before the war, "weaker financially and weaker administratively." It does not challenge the Capitalist class or the principles of Capitalism. As Mr. J. A. R. Marriott, M.P., said at the Jubilee celebrations of the Oxford Co-operative Society (*Oxford Chronicle*, Oct. 13th, 1922): "If he thought the co-operative movement a menace to the private trader he would certainly not be there. But there was plenty of room for both to live and flourish." This is true inside Capitalism, but under Socialism there will be room neither for private, nor co-operative, nor municipal, nor State Capitalism to continue the exploitation of the workers.

Co-operation has solved no working-class problems and discovered no new principle. It does not abolish profits and interest: it only "defines the rights of capital" (*Co-operative News*, July 10th, 1926). "It says to the capital-owner . . . 'we pay you interest and our obligation to you ends with that.'" Sir Thomas Allen (C.W.S. Director) wants to see "those who had capital, those who had labour, and those who had intellect and organising power" to "work in a real co-operative way . . ." (*Co-operative News*, July 3rd, 1926).

It has disputes with the employees, strikes and lockouts, sometimes pays less than its private Capitalist rivals (see *Co-operative News*, 18.8.23.), and has even been known to call in a Capitalist Labour minister in a Capitalist Government to settle its differences with its employees.

When trade is slack it sacks members of its staff, introduces all the familiar speeding-up and wage-reducing devices of its competitors, and in short, behaves like any

other joint-stock Capitalist concern, that is, it behaves as it must, being a Capitalist organisation inside a Capitalist system of society.

Some there are within its ranks who look further, but these are learning by hard experience that they are, if anything, less able than Robert Owen to achieve the object which he set before him. "The Rochdale pioneers desired to solve the land and housing problems of their generation. . . . Co-operators now realise that these problems can only be solved by Parliament. They have entered politics to realise the ideals of the pioneers" (*Daily Herald*, April 24th, 1921). This is part of a speech by Mr. Barnes, Co-operative M.P., in which he explained why a Co-operative Party was formed and was necessary.

Co-operation has not and cannot emancipate the working-class. Only Socialism will do that. The workers cannot escape from the effects of Capitalism by joining co-operative societies. Neither can they escape Capitalism by retiring into Owen's "villages of industry." They must obtain for society as a whole the ownership of the means of production and distribution which are now the property of the Capitalist class. For this they must organise in the Socialist Party for the purpose of controlling the machinery of government. Once possessed of power they can then reorganise society on a Socialist basis of common ownership. Owen's ultimate aims can only be achieved by Socialist methods. H.

Another New Pamphlet.

We are proposing to publish a new pamphlet, but we cannot do so until we have the money. If we print 20,000 copies the cost will be in the neighbourhood of £100. We ask, therefore, for donations. As soon as we get sufficient to justify giving the order to our printer we shall be pleased to proceed. Let us have this pamphlet for the beginning of the 1927 propaganda season.

NOTICE.

On and after MONDAY, JANUARY 3rd, 1927, the General Secretary will be in attendance at Head Office during the following hours—

Monday, 9 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.

Tuesday, 9 a.m. to conclusion of E.C. Meeting.

Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.

Other days by arrangement.

The office will be closed for dinner from 2 to 3 p.m.

[Plechanoff's Famous Work now translated.]

THE MONISTIC CONCEPTION OF HISTORY.

By G. Y. PLECHANOFF.

Part II.

Thesis: Man and his opinion is the result of the environment, especially of social environment. This is the inevitable conclusion from Locke's main principle: the non-existence of innate ideas.

Antithesis: The environment with all its attributes is the result of opinions. This is the inevitable conclusion from the historical philosophy of the French materialists: *c'est l'opinion qui gouverne le monde*.

From these fundamental contradictions others followed, as, for instance, these:

Thesis: Man holds to be good those social relations that are useful to him; he considers as bad those that are harmful for him. *The opinions of men are then determined by their interests: "L'opinion chez un peuple est toujours determinee par un interet dominant,"* says Suard. This is not a logical inference from Locke, it is really a plain repetition of his words, "no innate practical principles . . . virtue generally approved not because innate, but because profitable . . . good and evil . . . are nothing but pleasure and pain to us."¹

Antithesis: Certain relations seem to men to be good or bad in relation to the general system of their opinions. In the words of Suard every person loves, supports and justifies only that which he thinks useful for him, (*Ne veut n'aime n'approuve que ce qu'il croit etre utile*), consequently, everything depends upon opinions.

Thesis: It is a great mistake to think that religious morality, for instance, the commandment about loving one's neighbour, has in any way helped the moral alleviation of men. Such commandments, as ideas in general, are powerless against men. Ideas depend entirely upon the social environment and social relations.²

Antithesis: Historical experience shows that "*que l'opinion sacree furent la source veritable des maux du genre humain*," and this seems true, because if opinions in general rule the world, then false opinions will rule in the manner of blood-thirsty tyrants.

1. Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Vol. I, Ch. 3; Vol. II, Ch. 20, 21, 28.

2. This proposition is more than once expressed in the *System de la Nature* of Holbach. The same is also expressed by Helvetius.

It would be quite easy to prolong the list of such contradictions of the French materialists, which some of our moderns inherited from them, but this would be superfluous. Let us rather examine the general character of these contradictions.

There are contradictions and contradictions. When, for instance, Mr. V. V.³ contradicts himself in every line. His logical sins can have no other value than that of a "human document." The future historian of Russian literature, will, in showing these contradictions, ponder over the social-psychological problem—how is it that so many readers did not detect contradictions that are so evident? But there are contradictions of another kind; these are the kind that do not put to sleep human thought, do not detain its development, but stimulate it to progress. The impetus for further development that they give is often so strong, that in the last analysis they are often, in spite of their contradictions, of more value than the logically perfect theories. About such contradictions Hegel said: "*Der Widerspruch ist das Fortleitende*" (contradictions lead forward). Of this kind are the contradictions of eighteenth century French materialism.

Let us examine their main contradiction. *Human opinions are determined by their environment; the environment is determined by opinions.* We can say about this what Kant said about his antinomies, the thesis is just as true as the antithesis. There can really be no doubt that human opinions (convictions) are determined by their social environment. But, it is just as true that no people will subject itself to a social order that is in contradiction to all its opinions. The people will rebel against it, and rebuild it according to their convictions. We must admit then, that the antithesis is also true. The question then is how can two theses, both true, contradict each other? There is a very simple explanation of it. They contradict each other only because we look at them from the wrong angle, an angle which

3. V. V. was one of the theoreticians of Narodnichestvo, and affirmed that capitalism would not develop in Russia as it has developed in Western Europe.

makes it appear that if one is true the other must be false. If we once find the true standpoint from which to look at them, the contradictions will disappear. Each of the propositions will take on a new form. We shall find that each one does not contradict the other, but adds to its completeness, or rather that each conditions the other; that if one is untrue, the other *must* also be untrue. How can we find such a standpoint?

Let us take one instance. It was often repeated, especially in the eighteenth century, that the form of government in each country is determined by the morals of the respective people. This is really true. When the old republican morality disappeared in Rome, the republic was changed into a monarchy. But on the other hand, it was not less often said, that the morality of a people is determined by their form of government. This is also true. And really, where could the Romans of the time of Heligobalus get their republican morals? Is it not clear that the morals of the people of the Roman Empire had to be just the opposite of the morals of the time of the Republic? If this is clear, we come to the general conclusion that the forms of government do determine the morals of the people, and the morals of the people do determine the forms of government. Surely we must have reached this conclusion through some mistake. What then is our mistake? Ponder as much as you will, you will not find any mistake in either of the two propositions. They are both above reproach. Usually in such cases people content themselves with the principle of *mutualism*: Morals influence the constitution, the constitution influences morals—everything is as clear as day, and people who are dissatisfied with this solution are, of course, "narrow-minded." This is just how our *intelligentzia* look at this question. They look at social life from the standpoint of *mutualism*; each aspect of life influences all others, and is influenced by all others. Only such a view is considered worthy of a thinking "Sociologist," and whoever, like the Marxists, looks for deeper causes of social development, does not see the complexity of social life. The French "Enlighteners" were also inclined towards this standpoint. The most systematic intellects among them (we do not include in this Rousseau who had little in common with the "Enlighteners")

did not go further than this. Thus, for instance, it is to be found in the famous *Grandeur et Decadence des Romains* of Montesquieu and also in his *De l'Esprit de Lois*. This is, of course, in itself a right standpoint. *Mutual influences undoubtedly exist between all sides of social life.* Unfortunately this standpoint does not explain much, for the simple reason that it does not say anything about the *origin of these mutually influencing forces.* If the form of government pre-supposes those morals which it influences, it is clear that it cannot be their first cause. The same must be said about the morals. The political order which they influence cannot be their creators. We must, in order to find a way out of this tangle, find that historical factor that is responsible for both the morals of a certain people and their political system and thereby created the *possibility* of their mutual influence.

The French materialists were greatly mistaken, when in contradiction to their usual view of history, they affirmed that *ideas* have no significance whatever, because environment is everything; not less mistaken is their usual view that declares opinions to be the fundamental cause for the existence of a certain social environment. There can be no doubt that there is a process of mutual influences between *ideas* and environment. But scientific investigation cannot stop at the recognition of this mutualism, because mutualism does not explain really the social facts. In order to understand the history of humanity, i.e., on the one hand, the history of opinions, and, on the other, the history of social relations, it is necessary to rise above mutualism; we must find, if we can, that factor that determines both the development of the social environment and the development of ideas. The task of nineteenth century social science was to find this factor.

The world is governed by opinions. But opinions also have a history. What determines their history? "The spread of Education," answered some as early as the seventeenth century. The "Enlighteners" of the eighteenth century held fast to this opinion. The more talented among them, however, were themselves dissatisfied with their own answer. Helvetius remarks that the development of knowledge is controlled by certain laws. He even writes a very important essay to explain the social and

intellectual development of man as a result of his material wants. He has not succeeded in this; for many reasons he could not at that time succeed. It has remained for the thinkers of the next century to continue the work of the French materialists.

(To be continued.)

Trans. for MODERN QUARTERLY by H. Kantoro-vitch.

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS.

On the first of January each year, mankind is afflicted with an attack of a mild epidemic. It breaks out in a rash of New Year Resolutions. It views the soiled and speckled pages of the past and, stricken with remorse, resolves that the clean white page of the future shall incur no blots whatever. Usually some pet affliction is selected for treatment and the penitent resolves that henceforth in that respect he will be blameless. Alas! Usually in less than a week, the strong chain of habit has settled down into its accustomed place, and the "victim" feels more comfortable. The result is not necessarily a dead loss. He will at least have had the satisfaction of making the resolution, and the added satisfaction of breaking it. There is just the further possibility that if the effort of retrospection is long enough, and intense enough, a train of thought is started that may profoundly modify one's habits, especially of thought. Most of us are content to let the past sink as rapidly as may be into oblivion, and let that portion of the future that we daily call "the present" flow over us in the easy channels of habit. And yet, consciously or otherwise, we have continually to refer to the past, for it is the past that has made our habits, and it is only there we find experience. It is only by comparing the past with the present that we become aware of change. It is only by this comparison that we discern the lines of change and endeavour to use them to our advantage.

The farther we go back in the past, the greater is the contrast with the present, and the more we examine the interval the more are we made aware of the linked nature of the sequence of events we call history. The uninformed, unimaginative man, the mere creature of habit, is unaware of this process. He views the changes around him as mere waves that at one time seem to tower above him, the next to sink below him, the net result leaving him much at the same

level. Events seem disconnected and unrelated. He is the sport of his fears and the slave of the power of suggestion. Change disturbs him and the unfamiliar has simply to be described to him as hurtful, and he flings judgment to the winds and gets panicky. Witness the present use of the words "Moscow" and "Bolshevism." But had he information and imagination, together with the habit of thought we call judgment, he would not be afraid of foolishly used names. He would discern that events were not simply up and down movements of waves on a surface. He would discover they had direction, a current, a definite line. It is this progression, this linked emergence of the present out of the past, that we call Evolution.

It is not the purpose of this article to go over the events of history and shew their inter-connection. That, however sketchily done, would require a book. In its briefest form, it is doubtful if it has been better done than in our little pamphlet "Socialism," a miracle of condensation. Here we would simply direct attention to a few events of the past year. It may not be altogether inapplicable to start with an occurrence at the Lord Mayor's banquet in November, 1925, when A. Chamberlain drank from the "loving cup" with the German Ambassador. Though not in itself an "event," it was an indication of the point we wish to emphasise—the speed with which contemporary history is moving. Only seven years previously the Germans were so abominably vile as to be outside the pale of all civilised intercourse. At that time the only good German was a dead one. A phrase like "never again" was the least adamant of the slogans for the future. And yet within seven short years Mr. Chamberlain and the "Huns" have their noses in the same trough. Then followed Locarno, a subject we dealt with in our May issue. Perhaps the most significant comment on Locarno from a Capitalist standpoint was contained in the *Financial News* of October 23rd. It said:

But the ultimate aim of German producers has been to draw other European countries into international agreements to prevent ruinous competition for the reduced world demand. This aim blossomed out after the Locarno treaties had given the stamp of respectability to agreements between former enemies.

Particularly note that last sentence. Locarno was the first time it was considered

expedient the general public of Europe should know how intimate the relations of international capital had become.

Possibly the General Strike was the next in order of sequence, when the workers once more demonstrated the futility of fighting capitalism with the weapon of passive starvation. But next in order of significance was the formation of the European Steel Trust. This was followed by the meeting—the very secret meeting—of German and British capitalists at the house of Colonel Wilfrid Ashley. Or did the meeting precede the Steel Trust? However, it does not matter much, for the £65,000,000 chemical combine was the next thing to occupy attention, followed by the huge newspaper deals of Berry Bros. and the incorporation of the White Star Line in a huge Shipping Trust.

We submit that these huge agglomerations of capital, and especially those of international capital, are intensely significant. Their most significant feature is the speed at which they are being consummated. We suggest that it is a possible indication of the fact that capitalism is entering upon its last phase. Pursued far enough it can have but one effect upon the international working class. The same or a much greater quantity of goods can be produced with a less expenditure of labour-power. This will mean an intensification of the unemployed problem and, as was shewn in our article on "Mass Production" last month, a worsening of working class conditions generally.

As we have indicated, the present is the child of the past, and, as the *Financial News* says in the issue mentioned:

The Cartel movement must be regarded as the economic expression of a tendency that is at work also in politics and social matters: the tendency towards international co-operation.

Naturally the *Financial News* means capitalist co-operation. After mentioning that Great Britain is inextricably bound up with the Continent, it says:

In any case, this country must hasten the centralisation of the organisation of her industries. This is essential, whether we co-operate or compete. Happily, there are signs that our industrial statesmen realise the necessity. In some cases British industries have taken the lead in forming agreements with the Continent; examples are the International Explosives agreement, brought about by Nobels, and the artificial silk agreements between Courtaulds and the Glanzstoff Fabriken. The British chemical

combine may soon be included in a Continental agreement.

Now, to the working class, the lesson of all this should be clear. Unless they organise to take and control these great social forces, they will soon be the hopeless serfs of gigantic monopolies embracing whole continents. The huge numbers of them that still find employment through the waste of competition will be slowly relegated to the more or less permanently unemployed.

What are the workers doing about it? Here are their masters swiftly but calmly organising into larger and still larger combines, nationally and internationally. They speak quite refreshingly of the growing hindrance of tariffs and frontiers. They pause in their task of unveiling war memorials to their slaughtered serfs, and have a friendly little chat with their late enemies as to sharing the loot. We are faced with the greatest aggregations of capital the world has ever seen. It is here, now, growing with a speed that yesterday was thought inconceivable. It is for the workers to decide, and at once. This New Year they must make a resolution that they will break at their peril. The peril will be there even if they do not make the resolution. They must resolve that Socialism is a live issue, to be decided now, in the immediate present. They must drift no longer. Those who are convinced of the truth of our position must realise that there is but one place for a logical Socialist—inside our ranks. Only the direct reasons should prevent him joining us. If Socialism is worth anything, it is worth the utmost we can give it. If we only acutely visualise the world this can be under Socialism, we shall count nothing we give, no service we render, too great a sacrifice, if it serves our glorious aim. We have but to imagine our present world, intensified by the events foreshadowed, to nerve ourselves for the task. Come, then, the cause is worthy. Who will help?

W. T. H.

WEST HAM BRANCH.

A Series of Lectures will be held on SUNDAYS at 7.30 p.m., commencing SUNDAY, JAN. 2nd, at the Engineers' Institute, 167, Romford Road.

Subject—"THE BASIS AND PRINCIPLES OF SOCIALISM."

Admission Free. Questions and Discussion.

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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JANUARY,



1927

THE PAST, THE PRESENT, AND THE FUTURE.

Another year is dawning and perhaps it is as good a time as any to take stock of our progress.

That the class struggle exists and is waged consciously by the masters should be obvious to those who have given a little thought to recent events. The struggle of the miners put up and the relentless attitude of the coalowners, backed up by other sections of the employing class, makes this clearer than it has ever been.

The general rise in wages due to war causes (though this rise lagged behind the rise in the cost of living) had given place to a general downward tendency as the shadow of war lifted. Professional politicians and Labour leaders vied with one another in helping the campaign for increased production, urging that to get back to prosperous peace conditions more goods must be produced at a cheaper cost of production. The plea was put forward on two entirely different lines, so that if one failed to catch the credulous the other might succeed.

One line of argument was that owing to the slackening in production of ordinary merchandise during the war period the world was poorer and different countries were heavily in debt. In order to save the world from bankruptcy, then, all workers

were urged to put their backs into production to bring into being the rosy future that was promised.

The other line of argument was that we had fallen behind during the war and our competitors had cornered the market. So that we must work harder and cheaper in order that the "foreigner" might be pushed out of the markets upon which he had obtained a grip.

Of course the tale told to the workers of this country was similar to that told to the workers of other countries.

To some extent the propaganda succeeded and those who sought to show the ugly hand of exploitation in the tangle of romance and fable pouring from press and platform were treated as victims of a narrow outlook that prevented a clear conception of world problems.

Down came wages and harder became the conditions, until the workers were at last forced to take more or less united action lest the last vestige of the conditions, obtained after years of struggle, should be filched from them.

In the early part of this year wage-struggles were imminent in the more important industries; then, like a clap of thunder, came the miners' lock-out and the partial general strike, the latter brought to an ignominious end by the action of the Government and the connivance of those who had so energetically backed the "increased production" campaign.

These events have already been fully dealt with in these columns, but black though the recent record has been, it yet contains gleams of brightness that promise well for the early coming of daylight.

In spite of the limitations of the recent strike and the deplorable attitude of many of those who were its leaders, it yet demonstrated beyond contravention, to those who look facts squarely in the face, that however useful a General Strike might be in a wage-struggle, it is utterly useless as a means to remove the capitalists' domination. It further demonstrated that class solidarity has made considerable progress among the workers.

Before the Labour Government came into office, a few years ago, large groups of workers had taken part in disastrous strikes. The results sickened them for a time of what goes by the name of "mass action," and they turned their attention more to

political action, with the result that the Labour Party were returned to Parliament with a vastly increased vote. The actions of the Labour Party when in office alienated a good deal of its support, with the result that "mass action" again had a vogue. Now we have a gigantic object lesson of the weaknesses of "mass action," and again the workers are turning longing eyes politically. To some, memory is a fleeting thing, and in spite of the history of the Labour Party and the political organisations that support it, there appears to be a tendency to give it another trial. It is just here that we come in to make our protest.

Times out of number we have shown in these columns the fundamental weaknesses of the Labour Party, and have demonstrated that it is unworthy of working-class support.

Our propaganda, however, is seriously limited by the lack of finance. With infinite difficulty we have managed to publish a few thousand copies of the SOCIALIST STANDARD and spread them as widely as means would permit. We have struggled to place a few pamphlets in the field of propaganda, but lack of funds has prevented the reprinting of old ones and the publication of new ones. We are unable to send speakers to many places throughout the country again because of the lack of the sinews of war.

For the above mentioned reasons we have only been able to reach a limited number of our fellow workers. Yet in spite of this serious defect our progress during the past year has been gratifying. We have had a most hopeful and continued influx of new members, and branches have been formed, or are in process of formation, in districts that hitherto had heard no word of us. This shows that there is a demand for a genuine working-class political party having for its avowed object the abolition of wage-slavery.

With the coming of the New Year, we therefore appeal to all those who are in agreement with our principles and policy, but have not yet joined, to take the step now and help us in the only struggle that dwarfs all others—the struggle of the wealth producer for control of the instrument they operate and the wealth they produce.

To further this end we want as much funds as sympathisers and supporters can contribute. For instance, now that we have received the final delivery of our pamphlet

Socialism, we have another pamphlet on historical lines that waits but the funds to publish.

Help us with your membership and with funds so that we can carry the fight all over this island.

**WHAT DETERMINES PRICES?
SOME QUESTIONS AND OUR REPLY.**

To the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

The answer to A.W.S. on Currency in December SOCIALIST STANDARD interests me, as I too am perplexed about prices, and will ask for instruction.

As I understand Marx, prices are governed by value. Now as coal, bread, boots, etc., embody no more labour since than before the war, and are of no more value, why is it that prices have at times doubled? I have read SOCIALIST STANDARD for June, '22, but can't gather from it a reply to my difficulty. I'm putting the question thus tersely, so to avoid complications. If I could get this clear, perhaps my other perplexities would dissolve.

Some phrases in your answer to A.W.S. seem to fog me: e.g., (3) "It depends," "a huge inflation of the paper currency, the rise in prices, due to this movement."

And in last few lines of the answer, e.g., "When a movement of currency affects prices."

Does currency affect prices?

I shall be obliged for instruction.

A. S.

P.S.—Your reference to "Pleb's" discussion, I did not find in December, '21, or May, '22, SOCIALIST STANDARD.

ANSWER TO A. S.

The general question of the relation between prices and value is so well worked out by Marx in "Value, Price and Profit" that our correspondent is referred to that volume for a full answer.

Briefly it may be said that while prices are based on value they may deviate within quite wide limits above or below value in certain circumstances. The most usual of these are supply and demand. If demand increases relative to the supply, prices will tend to rise, even though value has not altered. On the other hand if the demand falls relative to the supply, prices will tend to fall, and may fall below value.

The special conditions at the opening of the Great War enabled capitalists to raise

prices enormously. Since the War ended they have kept up prices in many instances by combinations, kartels, and trade agreements. It must be remembered that a general rise in prices means a rise in the cost of commodities required to maintain and reproduce labour power. This means that either the price of labour-power—that is, wages—must rise, or the workers' standard of living must fall. Even with some rise in wages the standard of living may fall if the rise in wages is not equal to the rise in the cost of living at the old standard.

As we tried to show in the answer to A.W.S., when a currency is inflated as a result of the fall of credit (see example in June, 1922, *SOCIALIST STANDARD*), the purchasing power of each piece of currency falls. If the labour time necessary to produce the commodities remains unaltered, the fall in the purchasing power of the currency is necessarily followed by a rise in prices. In other words, if a currency falls in value—or credit—while other things remain the same, prices will rise. If a currency rises in value—or credit—and other things remain the same, prices will fall. This is what was meant when referring to a movement of currency affecting prices.

By a slip of the pen the dates were given wrongly in the answer to A.W.S. They should have been as follows:—*SOCIALIST STANDARD* for June, 1922, December, 1922, and May, 1923. ED. COM.

MATERIALISM v. SPIRITISM AGAIN.

To the Editor of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*.
Dear Comrade,

I have just seen your criticism of Isabel Kingsley's pamphlet in your October number.

I will leave Comrade Kingsley to deal with the main points at issue, and will only refer here to the paragraph regarding myself. All I meant by my expression "find ourselves on the wrong road" was, of course, that if a party insisted too dogmatically on a philosophy which modern thought might find to be mistaken, it might get left behind, and consequently have to undo a good deal of what it had insisted upon. I understand modern thought is changing very much in its ideas regarding the nature of matter, etc., and the fullest, freest discussion ought to be permitted.

Certainly religious advocates dogmatise, as you say, but is that any reason why Communists and Socialists should do the same?

Yours fraternally,
FLORENCE BALDWIN.

REPLY TO FLORENCE BALDWIN.

The only point requiring notice in Florence Baldwin's letter is the statement that she "understands modern thought is changing very much in its ideas regarding the nature of matter, etc." In what way is this supposed change taking place? Many wild claims are made by Spiritists, even to the contradiction in terms, that "we are dematerialising matter"!

Scientists, however, are continuing along the lines, that have proved so fruitful in the past, of observation, experimentation, and classification of the facts of phenomena around us. In the case of matter, fresh properties have been discovered and new facts of structure have been demonstrated. But these are all properties and facts of MATTER. In the words of one scientist, they have been "exploring the atom"—but they have not been abolishing it. The more modern chemist still uses the atomic weights in building up his combinations, though he now knows more of what is inside the atom than his father did. Every step in the new knowledge has been made along rigid materialist lines, and along no other.

To hold firmly to the scientific method—the only one that has brought us any results—may be "dogmatic" (though we deny that), but it is the only sensible position.

J. FITZGERALD.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. WRIGHT (S.E.):—Your letter on finance arrived after we had gone to Press; matter will be dealt with in next issue.

W. NICHOLLS (Harringay):—Your lengthy letter on finance and our reply has been crowded out of this issue and will appear next month.

LEYTON BRANCH.

Commencing SUNDAY, JANUARY 2nd, a series of Lectures will be held at

Trades and Labour Hall,
Grove Road, Leyton, E.

Subject—"SOCIALISM."

Doors open 7.0 p.m. Chair taken 7.30 p.m.
Admission Free. Questions and Discussion.

A SOCIALIST SURVEY.

Effects of Re-Organisation.

Labour Leaders, Miners' Leaders, Liberal and Tory Leaders have all been talking on the need for reorganisation in the working of the mining industry. In fact, the miners' leaders have insisted upon immediate reorganisation as a method by which the industry could be put "upon its feet." Now we have the I.L.P. journal, *Forward*, admitting the effects of reorganisation under capitalism is to worsen the workers' lot. This is true whether the reorganisation takes place by Trusts or under Nationalisation.

This is *Forward's* confession taken from their front page, signed by Thos. Johnston, M.P. (Dec. 11th, 1926):

Every proposal we make for the reorganisation of industry means more unemployment.

The *Daily Mail* justifies the reorganisation of our electrical supplies, on the ground that it will save the labours of 300,000 colliers.

Reorganisation of the coal industry means the discharge of 100,000 colliers.

And we have already a permanent standing army—the coal stoppage apart—of well over 1,000,000 fellow-citizens who can find no employer.

Unemployment Insurance as a Narcotic.

After commenting on the decline of unemployment agitation compared with pre-war days, *Forward* (same issue) says: "Unemployment insurance of course is responsible for dulling the edge of the agitation." Mr. Johnston, M.P., who writes this, forgets to state that the Labour Party was one of the parties to the passing of the Unemployment Insurance Act. He complains of the effect of their work, but his "remedy" is to set up a Select Committee of the House of Commons to examine unemployment relief proposals! Such is the Capitalist policy of the advanced Clyde!

The Rich Labourites!

Commander Kenworthy has won Hull for Capitalism under a Labour label. He has boasted of the support of big business men locally who saw "no change" in his "Labour" programme from his Liberal policy. Now the wealthy Oswald Mosley has won Smethwick with a policy to suit the moderate Liberal. To show the "proletarian" character of the Labour Party let us quote Philip Snowden, their "Chancellor" (*Forward*, December 11th, 1926):

A few cases have happened lately where a candidate has been put up to auction by the

local Labour Party and sold to the highest bidder.

New recruits to the party, who happened to be wealthy, have bought favourable constituencies. They have no record of service in the movement, and they know little or nothing about its principles. Men with long years of service in the party have been put aside because they were poor. Such incidents demoralise the local party, and put it on a level with the capitalist parties.

The article is headed, "Who Pays, Rules." Snowden says "Those who pay the piper call the tune."

Is the Marxian Theory of Value out of Date?

A writer (John Smith) in the Canadian *One Big Union Bulletin* (November 18th, 1926), writing on "Marx and Super-Capitalism," says that Marx's theory of value is not true under large scale production in America.

The essence of his statement is in the following extracts:

Most of the European capitalistic countries are still producing on the basis of nineteenth century social machinery, whereas America is sailing under the flag of super-capitalism. Principles of Economics that still hold true on the European Continent and in England are no longer applicable to the economic conditions of North America.

Super-capitalism has changed some of these "economic truths," considerably. With the elimination of competition, cartels for price-fixing and control of production and distribution have effectively done away with the principle of "socially necessary labour power" as the basic unit of commodity prices. Industries controlled by such cartels and falling within the "mass production" class are regulated at the will of the industrial magnates whose wish is the law in the economic field as well as in the political.

The Will Power of the Capitalists.

Like most critics of Marx who allege that Marx is out of date, this Winnipeg writer does not attempt to show what has taken the place of Marx's labour theory of value. His only claim is that the will of the Capitalist determines prices. Marx has already dealt with the alleged free will of the Capitalist in "Value, Price, and Profit." Like all so-called wills and decisions, the Capitalists' will is conditioned by circumstances. We might ask with Marx how is the power of the Capitalists' will determined? What are its limits? This writer, who says "economic laws are conveniently thrust aside" by these super-Capitalists, might tell us why these magnates whose "wish is law" don't charge twice as much as they do for their goods. Is it modesty? Or self-denial?

The Truth of the Labour Law of Value.

The real fact is that the super-Capitalists and trusts are aware of the truth of the labour law of value. Every worker in the Ford Plant at River Rouge, or even in the assembling plant at Winnipeg, can tell our Winnipeg writer that continual and unceasing efforts are made to reduce the time taken to produce the articles. The same truth applies to all large scale production, especially in the country named by our writer—the United States of America. The continual reduction of prices of Ford cars, for example, took place after (as Ford admitted) the time taken to produce cars had been greatly lessened.

It is not the will to charge higher prices that we see at work specially in the trust. It is the scheming and planning to so increase output per man that less labour is embodied in each article, thus enabling them to outsell their rivals and increase their profits. The secret of Ford's and all similar firms is that with tremendous capital laid out in modern machines the work can be so divided up and simplified that more goods can be produced in the same time. Every modern manufacturer knows the truth of Marx, and hence the employment of the latest devices and systems. The firms who cannot invest enough capital to lay down the most up-to-date plant cannot compete with the efficiency and labour-saving methods of the Trust. If it was simply a matter of will to charge higher prices there would be nothing new or modern about the super-Capitalists. All sellers have the will to get the highest price the market will bear, but to-day, as well as a century ago, the seller's will depends upon suitable conditions for its gratification.

The Power of the Trust.

The rings, trusts and huge firms find the way to wipe out their rivals is to produce cheaply. The way to produce cheaply is to reduce the amount of labour involved in producing each article. Hence the trust erects modern large plants and installs the latest machines and speeds up their workers to the last pitch. As an illustration of the truth that trusts can sell cheaper, take Canada and U.S.A. Most articles produced in Canada are higher in price than in U.S.A. Canada has smaller workshops and fewer self-contained industrial plants than U.S.A. and more time on the average

is taken to produce Canadian goods. Does our critic explain the continuous decline in price of Ford's Cars since 1910 as a constant change in Mr. Ford's will?

The combines' power to charge higher prices is limited by—

- (1) the purchasing power of its customers;
- (2) the similar goods to be obtained from rival firms;
- (3) the use of substitutes when price is too high;
- (4) the decline in amount sold of these commodities if price is higher than market will bear.

Even mighty Ford finds himself faced with the rivalry of the greater combine backed by Morgan and Wall Street Bankers—the General Motors Co. This firm in its turn adopts the same methods of reduction in time taken to produce each car, with the result that a number of cars are offered in competition with Ford's price.

To-day, as when Marx wrote his address on Free Trade—cheapness is the battering ram that breaks down the barriers of competition.

Where the Workers are Robbed.

The worst use of articles like that we have criticised is that attacks on "monopoly prices" lead the workers to look at things from the point of view of consumers of commodities.

Actually the workers are the smallest consumers of the total national production. Their purchasing power is limited to the amount of their wages. The Capitalists are able to buy the largest quantity because their "share" of the total output is largest in the shape of rent, interest and profit.

The workers must view matters as producers, being the only class engaged in production. It is where they produce that they are exploited. The demand then must not be "Lower Prices," but the "abolition of exploitation."

The Fool Programme of the Communists.

The alleged revolutionary Communist Party offers another Red Programme for its vote catchers to work on.

The following is what they demand as a "full Socialist Programme"! ("Communism is Commonsense," p. 18.):

1. Nationalisation of mines, railways and large-scale industries without compensation and with workers' control.

2. Nationalisation of the land and the banks in the same way.

3. State control of foreign trade.

4. Capital levy on all fortunes over £5,000, and no interest to be paid on National Debt holdings over that figure.

5. A steeply graduated income tax on all incomes over £250.

6. National minimum of £4 per week for all who work, and a minimum 44-hour working week.

7. Maintenance of the unemployed at trade union rates by the State, under control of the trade unions.

8. Repeal of all anti-Labour laws (E.P.A., etc.)

9. Wiping out of all Reparations and War Debts.

10. Declaration of independence of the Colonies and withdrawal of British troops.

11. Credits to and friendly relations with the workers' government of the Union of Soviet Republics.

None of these demands, from Nationalisation to 44-hour weeks, touch the cause of working class slavery, nor do they offer any solution to the "social evils" of to-day. They are Communist idiocy.

The "Savings" of the Workers!

Once again we are treated to the story of huge savings of the workers! A writer in the *Burton Daily Mail* for December 15th complains of the Socialist statement of the rich getting richer and the poor poorer, and gives the usual figures of the savings, "mostly of the working classes." He quotes the Chairman of the National Savings Committee on October 20th stating the following increase from 1916 to 1926:

	1916	1926
	Million	
	£	£
Cash value of Saving Certificates	—	475
Deposits P.O. Savings Bank ...	190	280
Deposits Trustee Saving Banks ...	54	82
Building Societies ...	64	166
	308	1,003

Even accepting these figures as correct and ignoring the obvious duplication of funds in different kinds of institutions—what evidence do they offer of being working class savings? We challenge the writer to show that they are mainly workers' investments. It is well known that small business people, shopkeepers and others of similar position, use these institutions very largely. The writer also forgets to state the number of different persons holding these apparently huge sums. If these figures offer evidence of increasing luxury of the workers—what striking evidence on the other side is shown by the mounting

cost of poor law relief and unemployment "relief"? If we are so well off why the united cry of decline in prosperity? In reality bank returns clearly show the prosperity of the employers in a world of working class poverty. A. KOHN.

THE LESSON OF THE COAL DISPUTE.

WHAT Mr. COOK HAS FAILED TO LEARN.

The dispute in the coal industry has prompted many writers to indulge in their favourite practice of pointing a lesson. Mr. A. J. Cook, as the chief representative of the miners, tells us in the *New Leader*, 26.11.1926, what is "The real lesson of the coal war," "The lesson which the working class must, and will, draw from the greatest industrial upheaval in our history."

Mr. Cook emphasises again and again the bitter hostility that exists between the Capitalist-class and the working-class. His first reference is to arbitration and conciliation.

It seems to me that anyone who can suppose that the workers can to-day obtain either a living wage or tolerable conditions in industry by these means must be quite ignorant of the national and international facts of present-day capitalist industry.

A realization of this fact during the dispute might have saved much time wasted, and dignity lost, searching for a basis of agreement. It should, moreover, be apparent that every attempt to reason concessions out of employers must, in the face of this antagonism be futile. Nothing has ever been won for the workers by conferences between employers and Labour leaders. The deciding factor is always power. If the workers are unable to damage Capitalist interests by withholding their labour-power, the oratory of their leaders cannot save them from defeat. What that defeat means for the working-class Mr. Cook informs us next:

The growing intensity of our industrial disputes, waged now not to gain new privileges for the workers, but in desperate attempts to preserve old gains, proves conclusively what we, as Socialists, have long been saying. Keir Hardie himself summed up the lesson in his famous phrase, "You must either end capitalism or capitalism will end you." We are now face to face with the fact that we can only end capitalism by creating and constructing a new social order. That is the historic mission of the working-class movement.

Mr. Cook then outlines certain facts connected with Capitalist methods and development which he finds only lead him to the same conclusion: the clash of interests between the Capitalist-class and the working-class. He says:

If this analysis of the present condition of capitalism is sound, then clearly there can be no identity of interest in present circumstances between the owners of capital and the workers.

Mr. Cook arrives at this conclusion by means of a quite unnecessary recital of recent Capitalist developments, "over-capitalization, the return to the gold standard, the burden of war debts, the scarcity of markets and etc." He fails to see that it is not in the development but in the nature of Capitalism that the source of class antagonism lies. Ownership of the means of wealth production by the Capitalist-class, and the merchandise character of human labour-power; the basic principles of Capitalist society, make harmonious relations between the two classes impossible.

A further process of reasoning brings Mr. Cook to the conclusion "that Capitalism can only exist with a permanent unemployed system connected with every industry," and the further conclusion contained in the following:

At the same time, every attempt to introduce new methods of production which increase output means that yet another consignment of workers is thrown on the industrial scrap heap.

Next, as a result of facing economic facts, Mr. Cook says:

Surely no one can now doubt that the object of the Government and the Capitalist Press—those twin brothers of oppression—is to smash the whole Trade Union and Labour Movement, and that they will be satisfied with nothing less.

From these facts and conclusions we are asked to learn that:

The lesson of this struggle is that Socialism is the only hope of the worker, his wife and his child; that we must equip ourselves for the control of industry; that, if we would accomplish our great purpose in our own day, we must start now.

It will not be out of place here to summarise Mr. Cook's most important conclusions:

1. The futility of arbitration and conciliation.
2. That there is no identity of interests between Capitalists and workers.
3. That new methods which increase output mean increased unemployment.
4. That the Capitalist Government is determined to smash the workers' organisations.

5. That Socialism is the only hope of the workers.

These conclusions are now in a convenient form for reference. Mr. Cook in his subsequent remarks forgets that he has written them. We shall see how he throws them overboard in a few sentences.

Nos. 1, 2 and 4 go by the board in a single sentence:

I appeal not only to workers but to every thinking man and woman in the country, *no matter their class*, to realise the gravity of the choice that lies before us.

How is it possible for Mr. Cook to think, at one and the same time, that the Capitalists are determined to smash the workers' organizations, and yet are capable of being influenced by a statement of the consequences?

If the interests of the two classes are opposed, how can the Capitalists be expected to respond to appeals for unity of thought with the workers?

No. 3 is next discarded in the most shameless manner. Still connecting the two classes as thinking men and women, he says:

Cannot they realise what the I.L.P. has grasped—that a living wage and reorganised industry must go together, and that these two are the only hope of our country.

The italics are not ours. Throughout the pages of "The Living Wage" the I.L.P. insists that new machinery, better organization, standardization and mass production are necessary to the "living wage." Mr. Cook gives them his blessing in the same column in which he declares that such methods mean yet another consignment of workers thrown on the industrial scrap-heap. "These two—a living wage and reorganised industry—are the only hope of our country," he says, yet only a few lines above he had written, "Socialism is the only hope of the worker." In that contradiction No. 5 went by the board; yet so eager was Mr. Cook "to start now" that he ruled Socialism out in the next paragraph to which he asserted its paramount importance:

We must make every city, town and village ring with our first and most urgent demand—the nationalisation of the mines.

Nationalisation of the mines is a question for those Capitalists who are dependent on the mineowners for supplies of coal. Neither the miners nor the working-class as a whole would be any nearer Socialism as

a consequence, either of its achievement or its advocacy. The first step in that direction is one of knowledge. Not with nationalisation, but with the knowledge of Socialism must "every city, town and village be made to ring" before we can truthfully say we are well on the road to Socialism. F. F.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY.

III.

Many people who profess to agree with the first three clauses of our declaration either fail to see the logic of the remaining clauses or decline to follow that logic in practice. They assent to the statement that the workers are slaves requiring emancipation, but ridicule the notion that they will emancipate themselves by means of the political machine. Yet a little reflection should show that there is no logical alternative.

The interest of the master-class leads them to resist any attempt at changing the social order. Consequently such a change necessitates a force strong enough to overcome such resistance. It requires an organisation sufficiently widespread to supplant the representatives of the interests of capital at every salient point.

In spite of this fairly obvious fact, however, we find numerous self-styled champions of the interests of the workers who profess to be able by one means or another to inaugurate a new social order by "leading" the mass of the politically ignorant and unorganised; and who deride the idea that Socialist education in the scientific sense is either necessary or even possible within reasonable time.

Such an attitude indicates (where it is honestly held) a serious lack of knowledge or failure to appreciate the lessons of history. It is frequently alleged that previous social changes have been effected by minorities, and that is, of course, largely correct; but the point is seldom considered that the changes so effected have been in the interests of minorities and not in the interests of the mass. Thus when the Capitalist majority overthrew the feudal minority in the French Revolution, the result was that the workers merely changed their masters. They merely secured a change in the form of their servitude.

To-day we are faced with the necessity of

abolishing servitude, of shattering every institution by which privilege and exploitation are upheld. Such a change implies, by its very nature, the conscious self-assertion of the mass, the workers themselves. Beneath the whole question lies the character of the productive forces at the present time. No mere minority can run the intricate industrial mechanism. That task obviously requires the active co-operation of the disinherited millions. So long as those millions are content to accept their enslaved state, so long as they are prepared to go on piling up wealth for their masters, those masters can afford to smile at the ravings of fanatics who fancy themselves as dictators.

On the other hand, once the mass awakens, once it realises its social power and importance, those same "leaders" will be swept away as chaff before the wind.

The mistake made by those who pour scorn on the educational work of the Socialist Party arises from the metaphysical habit of looking only on the resources of the propagandists as the sole force helping the Party's work. The influence of the social environment in shaping the outlook of the mass, preparing it as a soil for the Socialist seed, is ignored. The inertia of the mentality of the mass is insisted upon almost as a religious dogma. A psychological miracle is postulated. We are asked to believe that the human mind in the mass is an organism which fails to act according to the laws of its own development.

The Socialist reviewing history sees that as each class in turn has been thrust to the surface by economic evolution, that class has acquired a consciousness of its identity and interest. It has developed its own political organisation necessary to smash the institutions which stood in the way of its advance and to establish others which favoured it. By degrees the workers to-day are losing the illusions which bind them to their masters' interests; they are groping (not for a lead as we are often told) but for knowledge which will enable them to dispense with "leaders." It is the task of the Socialist Party to spread that knowledge.

(To be continued).

ECONOMICS CLASS.

Members desirous of attending the above, which will be held at Head Office, please forward names to General Secretary, stating evening suitable for them to attend. Tuesdays and Wednesdays are not available.

BRANCH DIRECTORY.

BATTERSEA.—Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road. Discussion second Thursday in month. Open to all.

BECONTREE.—Branch meets Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., at 32, "Greenway," Green Lanes, Chadwell Heath, Essex. Communications to S. Cash, at above address. Public invited.

BIRMINGHAM.—Communications to E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st & 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.

CENTRAL.—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

CLERKENWELL.—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

EAST LONDON.—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.

EDINBURGH.—Communications to Andrew Porter, 12a, Kings-rd., Portobello.

GLASGOW.—Communications to Sec., J. Higgins, 316, Rutherglen-rd., Oatlands, Glasgow.

HACKNEY.—Branch meets Saturdays, 7 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare Street, Hackney. Discussions after Branch Business. Communications to Secretary at above address.

HANLEY.—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock St., Hanley, Staffs.

HULL.—Branch meetings, Sunday, at 3 p.m., at the Trade and Labour Club (Jarratt Street entrance). Discussion after meeting. All readers in Hull requested to attend. Communications to Sec., G. Vincrad, 40, Brook Street, Hull.

ISLINGTON.—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to N. A. Bishop, 39, Poyning-rd., N.19.

LEYTON.—Communications to A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.

PADDINGTON.—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at Emanuel Church Hall, Harrow Road, near "The Prince of Wales." Communications to G. Shears, 200, Shirland Road, Paddington, W.9.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.—Communications to Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

TOOTING.—Sec., A. Yeomans, 15, University-rd., Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m.

TOTTENHAM.—Secretary 22, Dunloe-road, N.15. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

WALTHAMSTOW.—Communications to S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

WATFORD.—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Keneington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

WEST HAM.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

WOOD GREEN.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

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THE SOCIALIST PARTY
OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

Declaration of Principles.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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LONDON, FEBRUARY, 1927.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN CHINA.

Recent events in the East have thrown once more into relief the economic and political forces operating there. Apropos of the subject there comes to hand a sixpenny pamphlet, "British Imperialism in China," from the Labour Research Department, 162, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1.

The pamphlet traces briefly the rise of the Chinese bourgeoisie (or capitalist class) as a result of the invasion of the country by traders, manufacturers and financiers of Europe and America. Previous to that invasion China (like India and Russia) consisted of a vast population of peasants exploited in the main by feudal and autocratic methods.

Even to-day by far the greater part of the people are still peasants. To quote the pamphlet, "As yet only the fringe of China has been industrialised. The population directly dependent on agriculture is estimated at over three hundred millions. . . . Their economic position is appalling. The small size of most of the peasant holdings would make it difficult enough to maintain a family; but when out of the scanty proceeds a substantial proportion goes in land tax and innumerable other taxes and military levies, the balance is hopelessly insufficient. The tenants pay enormous rents in produce . . . while their general poverty is such that they have to borrow frequently from merchants and usurers to pay initial charges or to carry on until the harvest."

It is the old story of the peasant everywhere. The landlord, taxgatherer and moneylender form a holy trinity of parasites who by degrees drain the vitality from the very source of their own existence. The inevitable result is the collapse of their system and its replacement by one based upon more economical methods of exploitation, i.e., capitalism.

From among the peasants whose holdings cannot keep them there develops a class of hired workers who drift to the coast and along the rivers, there to become wage-slaves of Chinese and foreign employers in the factories, warehouses, ships and railways. Among these workers, during the last ten years, trade unions have made their appearance and as a result the political arena in China presents a confused spectacle to those who lack the key to the situation, i.e., Socialist knowledge.

The pamphlet sketches the various stages by which the foreign master class acquired the influence in China which now appears in danger. How the exclusiveness of Chinese society was broken down by force, the ports thrown open to trade, indemnities imposed and the Chinese Governments forced to accept loans—all this is a long story. The point which requires notice is that the Powers have been unable to obtain undisputed sway over the exploited masses. Competition between them has allowed a native class of capitalists to assert themselves and make a bid for political power. This class needs all the support it can get and so makes promises to the very workers and peasants whom it wishes to exploit to greater advantage. Hence we hear of Bolshevism in China. Lacking the necessary experience and knowledge the workers there swallow the promises of their masters and give them aid just as in Poland and Ireland and other places where nationalism has triumphed with dire results for the workers.

Concessions granted by a master class struggling for power are taken back again when it has become firmly fixed in the saddle.

Some rather rash claims are made in the pamphlet. On Page 51 we are told that "At the national conference of the Kuom-

intang held in February, 1924, a sharp divergence appeared between the right wing representing native merchants and capitalists, and the left wing based on the trade unions and led by Sun Yat Sen. The right wing stood for a nationalist party which should include all classes; the left wing for a revolutionary party . . . *with a programme which clearly aimed at destroying the capitalist system.* (Italics the present writer's). The left was victorious."

On Page 59, however, we are told that "The new programme of the Kuomintang" contains among other items the following! Under the heading of "Economic," "To establish a National Bank for issuing loans at the lowest rate of interest to develop agriculture, industry and commerce." Under the heading "Workers," "To enact labour laws safeguarding the right of labourers to organise and to strike. To limit working hours to fifty-four per week and to establish health and unemployment insurance. To support the workers in the organisation of Consumers' Co-operative Stores." Experience in this and other countries shows that capitalism is quite capable of surviving such "revolutionary" shocks.

In this connection a column of the *Manchester Guardian* of December 30th, 1926, contains items of interest. It is headed, "Sun Yat Sen's Gospel," and gives a digest of a book by the late leader of the Chinese Nationalists. Under the heading "Nationalism" (one of the "three principles of the people"), we are told that "In order to save our country we must first recover the nationalistic spirit!" Under the heading "Democracy," "Our people have had too much personal freedom." "All we can do is to give our people *political* equality." Finally under "Socialism" (the third principle) we are told that "Before using Socialism as a means to solve our social problems we must first find out the focus of all our problems. Many people in the West have taken *material* problems as the central point in human history. We must reject that false idea." "None of the forms of Socialism developed in the West are fitted for our country." "Our commerce and industry have not yet been developed. All we need now is to prevent rather than to remedy the evils arising from modern industry and commerce." "Our great and immediate problem is not a fight against capitalists but the prevention of the

rise of capitalists in the future. Our method of solving this problem is to develop State industry. Since we do not have enough experience and capital to develop that, it would be wise for us to employ foreign specialists and to borrow foreign capital to help us."

From the above extracts it is fairly clear that the situation is not so simple as our facile pamphleteers would have us believe. On their own showing the economic position in China is such as to make any destruction of capitalism and establishment of Socialism out of the question. That the peasants and small property owners will endeavour to free themselves from the grip of the money-lenders and resist the growth of large capitalists is only to be expected. That, however, is mere reaction, not revolution, while in order to achieve this end they appear to look to the foreign capitalists to assist them! A case of out of the frying pan into the fire.

In any event it is clear that the workers of China and elsewhere have nothing to gain by supporting either party in this capitalist and property-owners' struggle. The business of the Socialist is to destroy, not to build up the faith of the workers in Nationalism and the promises of political leaders.

The emancipation of the working class must be the work of the working class itself.
E.B.

PARTY ACTIVITIES.

Two splendid indoor meetings have recently been held in the Town Hall, Battersea. On December 5th Comrade Fitzgerald lectured on "Socialism and the Anti-Parliamentarians" to a very crowded audience. A large number of questions were answered and the opponents who took part in discussion completely showed the mental bankruptcy of the Anti-Parliamentarians.

On January 16th Comrade Kohn spoke on "The Socialist Case against Communist Policy." The Hall was again crowded and many questions were answered. The position laid down by our speaker was carefully evaded by those taking part in discussion.

MANCHESTER BRANCH.

A branch has been opened at Manchester. Members and sympathisers are invited to get in touch with W. Addison, 111, West Park Street, Salford.

[Plechanoff's Famous Work now translated.]

THE MONISTIC CONCEPTION OF HISTORY.

By G. V. PLECHANOFF.

Chapter II.

"One of the most important conclusions to which one must come through the study of history is: that the government is the most potent cause in shaping the character of the people; that the qualities and defects of nations, their strength or their weakness, their talents, their education or ignorance, are almost never due to climate or racial peculiarities; that nature gives everything to everybody, and the governments preserve or destroy the gifts of nature that constitute the common possession of the human race." In Italy there were no marked changes either in climate or in race; "nature was the same for the Italians of all times; the only thing that did change was the government—and these changes always brought with them, or came together, with changes in national character."

Thus argued Sismondi against those who tried to make the fate of nations dependent upon their geographic environment. His arguments contain some truth. Geography can really not explain much in history, especially because it (geography) is part of history, and because, as Sismondi says, governments do change, though the geographic environment remains the same. But this is only by the way; we are interested in another question. The reader must have already noticed that the fluctuations of the historical fate of nations is opposed to the stability of geographic environment. Sismondi knows of only one factor that can explain these changes: government—that is, the political order of a given country. The character of a nation is wholly determined by the character of its government. It is true that after dogmatically stating this theory, Sismondi tries later to soften it. Political changes, he says, come either before changes in national character or after them. That means that the character of the government is sometimes determined by the character of the people. Sismondi then has before him the same contradiction that the French "Enlighteners" had. The character of a nation is determined by the character of its government; the character of a government is determined by the character of the nation. Sismondi could just as little solve this contradiction as the French

"Enlighteners." He was therefore compelled to take as foundation for his discourse at one time one, at another time, another, member of this antinomy. But, as long as he has once taken the view that the character of a government determines the character of a people, he had to exaggerate out of all proportions the concept of government. It meant for him the *whole social environment*, all peculiarities of social relations. It would be more correct to say that for him, all peculiarities of a given social environment are affairs of government, the results of the political order. This is the standpoint of the eighteenth century. When the French materialists wanted to express, in a short and vigorous manner, their convictions as to the all-powerful influence of the environment on man, they said: "C'est la Legislation qui fait tout"—and whenever they spoke about legislation, they always meant *political legislation, political order*. Vico has a small article called *Essays on a System of Jurisprudence in which the Civil Rights of the Romans are Explained by Their Political Revolutions*. Though this essay was written just at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the ideas expressed in it, on relations between civil rights and the forms of government, were the accepted views until the restoration period. The "Enlighteners" reduced everything to *politics*.

But since the activity of a legislator, though not always teleological, is invariably conscious, and the conscious activity of a man is always dependent on his "opinions," we come again to the thought then, that *opinion is above everything else*, although we set out to prove the supremacy of environment. The younger set of French historians took an entirely different view of this problem.

The course and results of the French Revolution, with its numerous surprises, was in itself a flaring denial of the power of "opinions." Many had become entirely disappointed with "reason," and others, who did not succumb to disappointments, became more and more inclined to the view that environment is all-powerful, and the investigation of its development became all-important. But their

views on environment were also changed. The great historical happenings have demonstrated the weakness of legislators and political constitutions to such an extent that to declare them as the determining historical cause was ridiculous. Political constitutions began to be viewed not as a cause but as a result that is to be explained.

"A large number of writers, learned historians and publicists," says Guizot in his *Essais Sur L'histoire de France*, "tried to explain the given state of society and state of civilisation through the prevalent political order. It would be far wiser to begin with the study of society itself in order to understand its political institutions. Before these institutions can become causes they are results; society creates them before it begins to change itself under their influence. Instead of judging a people according to its political institutions, we must first study the people to find out what sort of a government it must of necessity possess. Society, its constituents, the life of its individual members, their dependency on their social positions, the relations between various classes of men—in short, the civil life of men (L'état des personnes), these are the problems that should first engage the attention of the historian who wishes to know how people lived, and the publicist who wishes to know how they were governed."

This view is just the opposite of Vico's. The latter would explain civil laws through political revolutions; Guizot, on the contrary, would explain political institutions through civil life, that is, through civil laws. But the French historian goes even further in his analysis of society. According to him, the civil lives of all nations that entered the historical arena after the fall of the western Roman Empire, are strongly tied to their land relations (état des terres). The study of their land relations must therefore precede the study of their civil life: "In order to understand political institutions, it is necessary to study the different groups that constitute a given society, and their mutual relations." In order to understand these groups, it is necessary to know the nature of their land relations. From this standpoint Guizot studies the French history of the first two dynasties. For him it is the history of a struggle between various groups of society. In his history of the English Revolution, he goes a step further, describing it as a struggle of the *bourgeoisie* against the aristocracy,

and thus silently admits that in order to explain the political life of a country, it is necessary to study not only the land relations, but their property relations in general.

This view was not only held by Guizot, but was also shared by Mignet, Thierry and others.

In his *Vous des Révolutions d'Angleterre*, Thierry represents the history of the English revolution as a struggle between the *bourgeoisie* and aristocracy. "All those whose ancestors belonged to the conquerors," he says in speaking about the first English Revolution, "deserted their castle for the King's camp. At the time it could be said that the armies assembled—one in the name of leisure and power and the other in the name of labour and freedom. All those who did not work, all those who looked to life only for the pleasures that they could get without working for them, assembled under the King's banner, to protect their common interests; all the descendants of the conquerors that were drawn into commerce fell in with the party of the people."

The religious movements of that time were, according to Thierry, only reflexes of real life interests: "Both sides fought for real interests. All the rest was only for pretext. Those who were on the side of the subjects were mostly Presbyterians, that is, they did not want any subjection even in religion. Those who fought on the other side were Anglicans or Catholics, that is, they strove for power and taxes, even on the religious field." Thierry quotes from the *History of the Reign of James the Second* the following words: "The Whigs looked on all religious opinions as politicians; even their hate of the Pope was caused not by the prejudices and idol-worship of that unpopular sect, but by their desire to make the power of the state absolute."

In Mignet's opinion "social movements are determined by ruling interests. These proceed to their goals, stop as soon as the goal is achieved, and make place for other movements which are unnoticed at first but which grow to be predominant in time. This was the way of feudalism. Feudalism exist in the needs of men—but not yet in practice—this is the first epoch; in the second epoch it existed in practice, slowly ceasing to correspond to man's needs and finally ceased to exist entirely. No revolution was accomplished in any other way than this." In his history of the French Revolution

Mignet interprets these events from the standpoint of the "needs" of different social classes. The struggle between these classes is for him the mainspring of what happened. Of course this standpoint did not find favour in the eyes of the eclectics of that time. The eclectics accused the new historians of *fatalism*, and the spirit of system. As it usually happens in such cases, the eclectics did not see the really weak points in these new theories and energetically fought against its strong points. At all events this conflict is old and at present uninteresting. It is more important to note that these views were defended by the St. Simonist, Bazar, one of the most brilliant representatives of socialist thought of that time.

Bazar did not think that Mignet's book on the French Revolution was perfect. As one of its defects he considered the fact that according to Mignet the French Revolution was a thing in itself, without any connection with "that long chain of efforts which, after destroying the old social order, were to make the introduction of the new order easier." He knows, of course, that the book undoubtedly has its good qualities. "The author strove to characterize those parties that led the Revolution consecutively. He wanted to show us the connections between those parties and the interests of certain social classes, to show how the development of events put first one party and then another at the head of the movement and caused them to disappear entirely afterwards. The spirit of system and fatalism, for which these historians have been so severely criticised by the eclectics are, in Bazar's opinion, most valuable assets."

If one should have asked Thierry, Guizot or Mignet whether the character of the people determines the form of its government, or the form of the government determines the people's character, every one of them would have answered that in spite of the fact that between these two there is always a strong mutual influence, they must, nevertheless, both be explained by a third, more important factor: "by the social life of the people and their property relations." And the contradiction that could not be solved by the French materialists of the eighteenth century, could thus be solved now.

Trans.: H. Kantorovitch for the *Modern Quarterly*.
(To be continued.)

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY.

III. (Concluded).

Beneath the workers there lies no further class. Neither from above nor from below can we look for assistance in the hour of social revolution. Labour is the most fundamental of social functions; consequently, the emancipation of the labourers will free every social function from the character of prostitution which clings to it under the régime of Capital.

Science and art to-day are the hired mistresses of Capitalist interests. Adulteration and advertisement of articles of sale, these are their most obvious functions. The elaboration of instruments of murder and plunder, and the idealisation of such processes on a national scale, are others.

With the freeing of the workers, science and art will acquire new meanings; they will become vested with a social purpose. Knowledge and beauty will be embodied in the actual material environment as well as the brains and bodies of mankind.

Women will no longer be under the necessity of providing heirs for property nor embryo hirelings for the labour market. Secure in a social heritage they will no longer need to offer their sexual attractions in return for the means of subsistence. Common property in the means of production will involve, therefore, the disappearance of both vice and virtue, dull respectability and its garish complement, monogamy and prostitution.

Thus every human being from birth onward will acquire a new social status. His or her own development will provide the basis for the maximum degree of social efficiency. The interests of society and individual are only antagonistic under a system based upon private property. Consequently the ethical conflict which forms the basis of moral codes will likewise disappear. Where the interests of each and all are identical, abstract moralising will be simply so much waste of time. The object of existence will be to be happy, the place to be happy will be here, and the means of happiness will be to hand for all. Hence none will need to seek in the realm of shades for the forces with which to guide their lives. A life hereafter will no longer offer consolation for non-existent misery; while ghosts and gods will become as meaningless as fairies and hob-

goblins. A rational outlook will accompany a rationally-ordered social life.

There remains to be considered the central power of the Capitalist, i.e., the State; its seizure by a revolutionary working-class cannot fail to alter its entire character. From an instrument for maintaining private property it will become the agent of its abolition. Wrenched from the control of their present masters, the armed forces will be reserved only so long as any danger of counter-revolution remains. As the re-organisation of society proceeds, the need for repression of anti-social elements, the relics of the dying order, will gradually disappear. The political character of society, that is, its organisation for the purpose of government, will give way to economic functions. The administration of *things* in the interests of all will render unnecessary the constant supervision of personal relations by the public power. Once these personal relations lose their pecuniary basis and become purely voluntary, their arbitrary regulation by an outside force becomes absurd. Hence it is clear that the entire organisation of society as we know it to-day will be sprung into the air with the uprising of the working-class. What will take its place we can only express in the most general terms. The mission of the workers is to destroy the existing obstacles to their own development. For that purpose we call upon them to organise into a political party in opposition to all forces assisting to maintain the present social order. E. B.

THE END.

BECONTREE BRANCH.

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DOES SOCIALISM MEAN FREE LOVE?

A correspondent complains of his inability to understand the attitude of the Socialist Party towards "free love." The following is an attempt to make matters a little plainer to him and possibly to others.

"Free love" is one of those terms like Atheism, Republicanism, etc., which are used by the professional anti-Socialists as a means of arousing the prejudices of their listeners, or readers, as the case may be, and rendering the calm and intelligent consideration of the subject more difficult on their part. As a rule the anti-Socialist has only to deal with the so-called "Socialist" who supports the Labour Party and who meets his opponent either with a mere denial of their charges or with a retort upon the lines of "You're another!" For nothing is easier than to show that there are supporters of capitalism, naked and unadorned, who claim to be Atheists, Republicans, Free Lovers, etc. This, of course, merely dodges the issue; but the Socialist Party has, necessarily, something more to say on the subject.

Marriage as we know it to-day is a legal contract whereby the man assumes the responsibility of maintaining the woman and acquires certain rights over her person. The State enforces the terms of the contract where possible, but its ability to do so depends, in practice, upon the social position of the couple concerned. In the case of members of the capitalist class who possess definite and relatively secure means of livelihood, all is plain sailing. The woman, if necessary, can obtain effective security and the man can proceed for divorce and damages against the usurper of his rights.

In the case of members of the working-class, their economic circumstances alter the position, although in theory the same law applies to all. The working man's wages are, in numerous cases, quite insufficient for the maintenance of a wife and family, and even where they are sufficient, their permanence is uncertain. Hardly any sections of the workers are free from the haunting menace of unemployment. Under such circumstances it is obvious that the legal regulation of marital relations becomes a mere matter of form. Married or unmarried, the woman of the working-class has to work in order to maintain herself and her children; while the latter are also under the necessity of contri-

buting to the family income as soon as possible.

Modern industry has wiped out the property of the peasants and the handicraftsmen, and has therefore wiped out the economic basis of marriage as far as the workers are concerned. Property and security are concentrated in the hands of the capitalist class, and as a consequence it is only among them that the legal contract retains its meaning. This, of course, does not prevent the religious and moral sentiments associated with the institution continuing to influence the minds of the workers.

Just as the workers accept the guidance of their masters in the political sphere, so in the realm of domestic life it is left to the Socialist to strip the veil of illusion from the hideous reality.

The parsons, and other hirelings of Capital, pretend that marriage is necessary for the protection of women. They have never yet explained, however, how it is that thousands of women of the working-class, married and unmarried, have had recourse to some form or other of prostitution in order to supplement their inadequate earnings or to escape for a time from the foul and squalid environment in which they have found themselves entrapped. Nor have they shown how the institution of marriage helps the girl who is confronted with the unwelcome attentions of her foreman, manager or other superior who holds her livelihood in his hands.

Sexual servitude is, in fact, but one of the inevitable aspects of the servitude of a class. Its form has changed with the changing of the forms of society. The feudal knights of the Middle Ages who played the part of gallants towards the women of their own class regarded the womenfolk of their serfs as legitimate prey. The patriarchs of ancient times were not content with numerous wives, but took to themselves concubines from among their slaves.

These various forms of sexual relationship took their rise from the property basis of society prevailing at the time. In more primitive times, however, before property had developed and assumed basic importance, other forms of the relationship existed in which women enjoyed a position of equality. Morgan, in his "Ancient Society," for example, has shown how the institution of marriage arose and developed

along with the changing conditions of obtaining a livelihood.

The effect which the social revolution will have upon marriage can, of course, only be dealt with in a general way. We are not prophets and do not profess to know just exactly how the men and women of the future will order their lives. It is not for slaves to make plans in advance for those who will be free.

This much, however, is plain. When the means of life become the common property of society, every individual will enjoy economic security which they will inherit from society as a whole. The present-day dependence of individuals upon others for their subsistence will disappear. As a consequence, the relationship between the sexes and between parents and children can then only be based upon mutual feeling.

We can, therefore, only surmise that the legal contract will vanish along with the economic necessity upon which it is based. The distinction between married and unmarried mothers or between legitimate and illegitimate children will simply become meaningless, along with all other distinctions which arise from the institution of private property.

Socialism, in short, will provide for the free development of each and all. E. B.

SCOTTISH HOME RULE.

One of the favourite futilities of the Clyde group of Labour M.P.s is to advocate Scottish independence. It has never been explained in what way capitalism administered by Scots from Edinburgh will be better for Scotch workers than capitalism administered from London. Mr. Kirkwood has, however, now learned by experience that it may even be worse.

At an Independent Labour Party meeting in Edinburgh he spoke as follows:—

Referring to a deputation to the Secretary of State for Scotland on behalf of the starving children of Dumbartonshire, he said "the officials of the Scottish Office were harder to deal with than those of the English Office."—*Manchester Guardian*, January 15th.

The simple truth is that capitalism will be just the same as far as the working class are concerned. What is required is another system of society, not new administrators for the old one.

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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The Socialist Standard,

FEB.,

1927

THE CLASS STRUGGLE.**A LESSON FROM GERMANY.**

There are large numbers of people who believe that discontent and social upheavals are caused by the propaganda of "agitators," and conversely that they can be prevented by counter propaganda. For them Czarism was overthrown by Lenin, the miners' strike was the work of Cook and the class struggle was created by Marx. They are unable to distinguish between the observation of facts and their causation. Marx did not preach the class war in the crude sense of desiring class hatred, either for its own sake or for any other purpose. What he did was to observe that in society as it existed before his eyes there was an employing, property-owning class and a propertyless employed class. No-one disputes this as the statement of an obvious truth, but for Marx it was not only interesting but also historically important. And having observed and examined the class division and consequent class struggle Marx rightly urged the need to apply this knowledge to current political movements. The workers must, he said, recognise that at bottom their movement, like the preceding movement by capitalists to establish and promote capitalism, is a class movement. It must eventually define clearly its class aim of transferring the means of production

from private hands to the community. Marx never supposed that he, or other Socialists, "invented" the class struggle or the idea of Socialism. Socialism is the product of Capitalism in that the facts of the existing system gradually force themselves upon the notice of the workers. The task of the Socialist propagandist is to hasten recognition of the facts of social development by directing the workers' attention to them.

The Socialist could not hope to propagate Socialist ideas outside of capitalist conditions or before the existence of capitalism. The propagandist with the Socialist idea is himself only the product of those conditions. A handful of Bolsheviks, intelligent and devoted though they may be, cannot build Socialist society in a country—Russia—which is overwhelmingly peasant in composition and organisation. They can and are doing the good work of speeding up development on modern industrial capitalist lines. Similarly unlimited capitalist propaganda in industrial Germany and England cannot prevent, it can only delay, the growth of Socialist ideas in the minds of the workers. It is with great pleasure that we read of an enquiry undertaken by the International Catholic Labour Unions "into the sentiments of those German workmen who are organised in the Roman Catholic 'Christian Trade Unions' which have a total membership of more than 600,000." The enquiry is reported fully in the *Manchester Guardian* (January 1st, 1927) from which the following is reproduced:—

"INDUSTRIAL PEACE" IN GERMANY.

Views of Catholic Trade Unionists.

(From our Berlin Correspondent).

The idea of "industrial peace" and of "reconciliation between workmen and employers" has been promoted with as great energy, skill and sincerity in Germany as in any other country. Leading German industrialists, even when they themselves are Conservative, have publicly declared that Germany cannot be governed without the help of the working class, and that Germany should have a coalition Cabinet in which the Socialist party is represented.

What German workmen themselves think of "industrial peace" has been rather a mystery, to which the Labour Press has given no satisfactory clue. But members of the Roman Catholic Centre party have, on behalf of the International Catholic Labour Unions, made an inquiry into the sentiments of those German workmen who are organised in the Roman Catholic "Christian trade unions," which have a total membership of more than 600,000. The result is of extraordinary and universal

interest. The Christian trade union, which have been criticised as "unrevolutionary," as subservient to the Church, and as hostile to the class war, form the moderate right wing of the German Labour movement.

The inquiry has been conducted with that complete honesty which the German Centre party always shows when it tries to establish facts that are important to itself. *Questionnaires* were circulated amongst the Roman Catholic clergy throughout the industrial districts of Germany as well as amongst the officials of the Christian trade unions. The following is a brief summary of the main subjects of the questions, as well as of the answers that were returned. Many of the answers are detailed enough to fill a book, and many were drawn up after long discussions with the workmen themselves. In every case the questions relate to Roman Catholic workmen organised in the Christian trade unions.

I.—RELATIONS BETWEEN WORKMAN AND EMPLOYER.

The general tendency of the answers is to record growing enmity. The mildest expression used is "cold neutrality." Other answers mention "estrangement," "distrust," "opposition," "tension," or speak of downright hostility. One answer says that the employers "have no soul and no conscience," and another that "the purely capitalist attitude of most employers does not allow trustful co-operation to grow up. . . . In the factory the workman feels that he is not treated like a human being. . . . In public and political life he sees that the employers are, for the most part, on the side of reaction, and hostile to democracy." The possibility of any improvement is denied. Some of the answers show that the industrial peace overtures made by German employers have aroused nothing but suspicion. Those employers who are themselves Roman Catholics are criticised with special severity. One answer says that "there is bitterness over the fact that Roman Catholic employers limit their Catholic ethics to their private lives and are anxiously concerned not to allow these ethics to appear in their business activities." Many complaints are made about the "soullessness" of the big industrial concerns. Complaints from smaller factories and workshops, where a more personal relationship between employer and employed is still possible, are, on the whole, less acrimonious.

II.—THE CLASS WAR.

Intellectually and as a Christian the Roman Catholic workman condemns the class war. But, as many of the answers show, hostility towards the possessing classes has a deep emotional influence upon him. Workmen who have no property of their own and are entirely dependent on their wages are filled with a sense of insecurity and dependence. They feel an ever-deepening resentment, "especially when wealth is displayed before their eyes by the propertied classes. It is their daily experience that the propertied treat the non-propertied classes as beings of a lower order—nothing, indeed, embitters a workman more than this."

III.—THE INTELLECTUALS.

A common fate in the years of revolution and inflation created some fellow-feeling between workmen and intellectuals, but almost all traces

of this have vanished. It is only "in an occasional priest or an occasional physician that the workman sees a true friend nowadays." Generally speaking he likes and respects the clergy who are engaged in welfare work, but the clergy and the Roman Catholic Church as a whole are losing their hold upon him. An answer from the Rhineland states that "one must be blind in both eyes not to see that the authority of the clergy is dwindling."

IV.—SOCIALISM.

There has been a great change; for whereas Roman Catholic workmen in Germany used to be hostile to Socialism, they are now no longer so, except in a purely theoretical manner. Almost all the answers agree on this point, although they vary in their attempts to explain it. In the economic struggle there is practically no difference between Socialist and Roman Catholic workmen. If the Church were to wage war on the Socialist movement, it could not, so the answers emphasise, expect the Roman Catholic workmen in Germany to show the slightest enthusiasm for such a war.

V.—COMMUNISM.

On the whole the prestige and the persuasive power of the Communist movement have diminished. It still takes a hold on those who think that Socialism is not coming quickly enough. Its influence on young and undeveloped workmen is considerable. The attempt to make Communism attractive to Roman Catholics by representing it as a kind of primitive Christianity has met with some success.

VI.—THE YOUNG GENERATION.

Youthful Roman Catholic workmen on the whole show great mental independence and an inclination towards Radicalism. They observe the formalities of the Catholic faith but without religious enthusiasm. There is a broad tendency amongst them to strive for a united trade union movement, irrespective of faith. Considerable numbers are attracted by the semi-military organisations of Fascist Right and Communist Left.

Here we have extraordinary evidence of the truth of the materialist view of history. The highly organised, richly financed and skilful propaganda of the Roman Catholic Church is helpless against the educational effect of the actual conditions of working class life. Marx truly described religion as the "Opium of the People," but to misquote a Biblical saying, "Man cannot live by opium alone." In the long run he demands material comforts, and rejects the social system with the religious apologists for it, because they offer him the opium of religion when what he needs is bread.

ECONOMICS CLASS.

Members desirous of attending the above, which will be held at Head Office, please forward names to General Secretary, stating evening suitable for them to attend. Tuesdays and Wednesdays are not available.

THE SINGLE TAX OR SOCIALISM.

The Editor,

Sir,—In various articles which appear in the SOCIALIST STANDARD stress is laid on what the S.P.G.B. declaim a fact, that the working class can expect nothing under capitalism, only their upkeep, i.e., food, clothes and shelter.

It is also claimed by the S.P.G.B. that the standard of living of the working class tends to the downward grade.

This statement is true, but it does not follow that the standard of living cannot be raised instead of sinking. I claim that the single tax will raise the toilers' living—by taxing the owners of land and compelling them to pay economic rent for land in use or not in use. This would solve the unemployed question, because the land will be open for anyone desirous of using it on conditions of paying the economic rent. The toilers working in factories, etc., could increase their wages, because there would be no competition for jobs. A. Maclaren, M.P. for Burslem, is regarded an expert on the land question, and I have heard him challenge all opposition, either in set debate or by questions, but S.P.G.B.ers have been conspicuous by their absence or silence.

The S.P.G.B. are flippant in abuse of Labour M.P.s and ought to be prepared to defend their position in debate.

Henry George spoke of Socialism as a noble ideal, which was sure to be realised.

I have no desire to write a lengthy letter, because space is needed for your own writers, but perhaps you will be kind enough to print my letter and also your reply.

Thanking you in anticipation,

SINGLE TAXER.

REPLY TO "SINGLE TAXER."

The position of the working class in relation to taxes—single or compound—has been dealt with on numerous occasions in the pages of the SOCIALIST STANDARD, but as our correspondent does not appear to have seen these articles, we may deal with the point again.

"Single Taxer" admits that our statements that the workers only receive, on the average, sufficient for maintenance and reproduction, with the standard of living tend-

ing to fall, is correct. But we need to know why this is so to meet "Single Taxer's" claims.

The various things necessary for producing wealth—land, factories, machines, railways, etc.—are owned by one class in society—the capitalist class. The working class only possess their power to labour. Before they can apply this labour-power to either the land or the instruments of production, they must obtain permission from the capitalist class to do so. The latter class only give this permission when they calculate that they can sell the things produced at a profit. The fact that individual calculations may sometimes be erroneous does not affect the main point. Moreover, the capitalists are not concerned whether the articles are used for necessities, comforts, or even vices. If they can be sold at a profit the uses to which they can be put does not matter.

Another important point to bear in mind is that when the articles are produced they belong to the capitalists—not to the workers. Thus the workers are without any means of living—even after working—until a share of what they have produced is handed back to them in the form of wages. The share left to the capitalists, after paying wages and replacing the value consumed in production, is called surplus-value. Out of this surplus-value various charges such as advertising, rates, taxes, etc., are paid. "Single Taxer's" theory is that by placing the whole burden of taxes upon the landowner the unemployed problem would be solved, "because the land will be open for anyone desirous of using it on conditions of paying the economic rent."

The first point to be settled here is what does "Single Taxer" mean by "economic rent"? He does not say. Various definitions are given by different writers, but the one in general use is "the price paid for the use of land apart from any buildings or structures upon it." How would this rent be fixed? Again, "Single Taxer" does not tell us. Generally single tax theorists claim that it will be settled by competition among those desiring the land. It is easy to see that this is how the bulk of such rent is decided to-day. For instance, a wealthy oil firm bought some land in the City of London a year or two ago upon which they built their offices. Now this land was "open for anyone desirous

A DISCUSSION OF THE MONEY QUESTION.

To the Editor,

"SOCIALIST STANDARD."

Dear Sir,

In reply to A.W.S. in the December issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD, on the question of currency, you deny that inflation had taken place during the war period, and, presumably during the years immediately after. In support of that contention you employ a formula which, as you insist, requires for its validity, "any given period under *normal conditions*" (italics mine).

2 It would be interesting to know by what line of reasoning, or by what stretch of imagination, the war period, and the post-war period up to the resumption of the gold-standard by this country, could be regarded as normal, and treated as such by you.

3 Gold was at no time during the actual war period allowed to function freely as a commodity. The whole supply of the British Empire representing upwards of 60 per cent. of the total gold output of the world, was commandeered by the Government for the use of the Bank of England. Consequently the possibility of measuring the depreciation of paper-currency, relative to gold-currency, which obtains during normal times, by the excess of the market-price of gold over its mint-price, was denied us.

4 No person was permitted to melt or export gold. Those who defied the law were known to make large profits; and thus the depreciation of the paper-pound could be gauged roughly by inference.

5 During the sterling exchange slump in 1915, the Bank made a gallant attempt to maintain the sanctity of the gold-standard and exported a considerable quantity of the metal over a short period. The pace was found too hot, however, even for a Bank that could monopolise for its exclusive use the major part of the newly mined gold, in the world, and the Government was compelled to come to its assistance and by the mobilisation of American securities held in this country, and by their subsequent sale abroad, managed to peg the dollar-exchange at a rate that made it more profitable to settle adverse balances by the purchase of bills, or drafts, than to export bullion.

6 The phenomenon of rising prices preceding the increases of currency during the war period you cite as proof evident that in-

of using it on conditions of paying the economic rent," and it may be asked why some labourer, suffering from lack of house room, did not take up this land and use it for himself. The answer would be "he could not pay the economic rent." It thus is quite evident that the only people who could hire the land under the single tax scheme would be the same as those who hire it to-day—namely, those wealthy enough to pay for it. This would leave the working class exactly where they are now—unemployment and all.

"Single Taxer" may argue that the position would be different because the "economic rent" would be taken by the Government for the purposes of taxation, thus relieving industry of a burden it bears to-day. This may be granted, and from this point of view, the single tax is the ideal form of taxation for the capitalist as it would be placing the tax where it would be the least trouble to him. But "Single Taxer" cannot show how this would alter the position of the workers. They would still remain slaves to the capitalists and still receive, on the average, a maintenance wage. How the capitalists have to divide up the surplus value they have robbed from the workers is of little concern to the latter. Their interest and business is to abolish the robbery by taking control of political power for that purpose.

ED. COM.

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BATTERSEA BRANCH.

A PUBLIC MEETING will be held on Sunday, February 13th, at 7.30 p.m., at Battersea Town Hall (Lower Hall).

Admission Free. Questions and Discussion invited.

flation could not have been the cause of high prices. A little consideration, however, will convince one that such precedence is quite in harmony with excessive issues of bank credit. The total credit-units, i.e., legal tender—currency, plus cheque currency, operating at a given time being conditioned by, and strictly limited to, the mass of credit entered on the books of the banks. 7 Thus in the sense that currency is merely an effect, the terms inflation and deflation, of currency, are meaningless. The amount of currency employed being that needed to allow commodities to circulate at their prices; which may, however, be *paper prices*.

The war-time inflation was a *credit inflation* which in its turn necessitated additions to the currency to give effect to it.

8 For example, as late as 1920 the Government still owed the Bank of England the sum of £400,000,000, which it had borrowed from time to time on "ways and means" account. Is it reasonable to suppose that when the Bank created that mass of credit (purchasing-power) goods of a gold value equivalent to the nominal amount of the loans, were actually available for exchange? And if not then rank "lawism" was being indulged in.

9 It is a matter of common knowledge that on the unpegging of the exchange in 1919, and when gold was again permitted to function freely on the open market it immediately commanded a premium; thereby pricking the bubble of pretence of non-inflation.

I am, sir,

Yours faithfully,
WILLIAM NICHOLLS.

REPLY TO W. NICHOLLS.

For ease of reference we have numbered our correspondent's paragraphs, but before dealing with his letter in detail it may be as well to note that the only place where he attempts to deny, definitely, our case is in the last line of his letter. All his other objections are in the form of suggestions and inferences.

1 This paragraph reads rather strangely. Mr. Nicholls introduces an emphasis not to be found in our reply to A.W.S., when he says we "insist" upon a certain formula. We did not "insist." We merely stated the facts in ordinary terms. Why does Mr. Nicholls introduce the emphasis? Perhaps the second paragraph will supply the answer. 2 Neither in the reply to A.W.S., nor any-

where else, have we stated that the war period, or the post-war period, could be regarded as normal. This is a deliberate misrepresentation of our statements. When this is noticed the emphasis of his first paragraph may be explained as a stepping stone to the misrepresentation of his second.

3 This paragraph is just journalistic clap-trap. For some time after the war had started gold was still in use as currency, but neither then, nor at any subsequent period would a sovereign purchase more commodities in the ordinary market than a £1 currency note. The two circulated as equals, proving there was no depreciation of the paper currency here.

4 This paragraph displays an ignorance of the economic basis of money. Outside of currency, gold is a commodity—a paper note is not. The only place where they can be compared accurately is in the country issuing the paper. (See June, 1922, S.S.)

5 This paragraph shows the confusion that arises from merely looking at the surface. The Government had to make huge purchases abroad, chiefly in America, and, with the issue of the war in doubt, the paper of every belligerent country was either only accepted with reluctance or entirely refused. But this has nothing to do with "inflation" here. If the amount of paper currency had been reduced to one tenth of the quantity then existing, it would have made no difference to the reluctance to accept this paper abroad. Hence the paying for the goods ordered by the securities called in.

6 Here Mr. Nicholls has to abandon his case. The careful reader will notice that he does not deny our statement of the facts. Neither does he say that the rise in prices *was* due to excessive issues of bank credit. He only suggests it by a *non-sequitor*. The question is not whether a rise in prices *could* result from an excessive issue of bank credit, but whether the particular rise we are dealing with *did* so result. Mr. Nicholls does not definitely claim that this was the cause.

Although it is a side issue in the present discussion we may point out that there is no such thing as "cheque-currency." Currency consists solely of legal tender. Cheques are not legal tender and therefore cannot be currency.

7 This paragraph gives us our case once more. That the wartime inflation was a

"credit inflation," we had already explained in our June, 1922, issue. But a *credit* inflation is not a *currency* inflation. Neither are *additions* to the currency *necessarily* inflation, as we have already explained.

8 This paragraph really has nothing to do with our case, but it shows once again how Mr. Nicholls has missed the essentials of the problem. For what purpose did the Government borrow the £400,000,000 "from time to time"? Firstly, for munitions of war. Secondly, to pay interest falling due on the loans. In the first case it is not only "reasonable to suppose," but an actual fact, that goods of a gold value to the amount of the loans were available—and delivered—to the Government to be consumed in war operations. In the second case it is simply an alternative to raising taxes to pay this interest. Ultimately these loans will be liquidated by operations with the taxes.

9 This paragraph mixes two things—the so-called unpegging of the exchange, a Government manipulation—with the restoration of the gold standard. Gold was not permitted to "function freely" until the gold standard was restored in 1925 and only then if the "bull" may be permitted, under certain restrictions. That there was no such thing as "the bubble of pretence of non-inflation," was shown by the fact that neither then nor now will a sovereign purchase more than a £1 currency note. And this despite the enormously important fact that, along with the so-called restoration of the gold standard, the £1 currency note was, for the first time, made inconvertible.

ED. COM.

Another New Pamphlet.

We are proposing to publish a new pamphlet, but we cannot do so until we have the money. If we print 20,000 copies the cost will be in the neighbourhood of £100. We ask, therefore, for donations. As soon as we get sufficient to justify giving the order to our printer we shall be pleased to proceed. Let us have this pamphlet for the beginning of the 1927 propaganda season.

STOCKPORT.

Those interested in forming a branch of the Party in Stockport are invited to communicate with THE GENERAL SECRETARY, 17, MOUNT PLEASANT, LONDON, W.C.1.

MUSSOLINI AND PARLIAMENT.

W. H. Kett (Kilburn) sends us the following inquiry. Our reply follows:—

"Does Mussolini rule as a dictator? Again has all opposition in Italy been squashed? I have Engel's Socialism, Utopian and Scientific before me and on page 38, paragraph 2, of the introduction he, speaking of the working class movement of England, France and Germany, says, 'In both the latter countries (France and Germany) the working class movement is well ahead of England. In Germany it is even within measurable distance of success.' Was Engels right when he stated that? Even now I don't think there are any Socialists in the German Parliament. At least as far as I know. If Engels' statement was correct Germany by now should have a very strong Socialist Party, but it is not the case.

ANSWER TO W. H. KETT.

Mussolini obtained power by being returned to Parliament with a majority of his supporters. This majority, with Mussolini at its head and as its leader, has ruled through Parliament by passing the various laws that have so severely repressed open opposition, and driven the more reckless of his foes into secret societies and intrigues.

But it is significant to note that, despite all his bluster and bounce, he is intensely uneasy about this majority continuing to support him. This is shown more particularly in his alterations of the constitution, designed to retain power in the hands of a minority. Such an act is a policy of despair. The fact that Italy is less developed industrially than the leading capitalist countries may enable Mussolini to hold office for a while, but the rise of any serious crisis will see the collapse of his present support and his overthrow. In certain respects his position is similar to that of Napoleon III. before the *coup d'état*—a position splendidly analysed in Marx's "Eighteenth Brumaire."

The Statement in Engel's book must be considered in relation to the circumstances of the time when it was written. Socialist propaganda was making more headway in Germany than in France or England, while the less stable political conditions in France allowed Socialist propaganda there to move ahead of England. "Revisionism" was of very small account, and the German

movement had dealt successfully with its anarchists. It was not until after Engel's death that the paralysing policy of capitalist reform, followed by the absurd colonial policy, side-tracked the German Social Democratic Party into what was mere Liberalism.

Unfortunately there is no country with a "strong Socialist Party" but the progress in England at the present stage compares favourably with any other nation.

Ed. Com.

THE PADDINGTON REVIVAL.

There is no more depressing district in the western suburbs of London than that mostly lying between Harrow Road and the High Road, Kilburn. Its streets have lost their character and the houses have seen better times. They were put up for the snobbish bourgeoisie family, but nowadays these dilapidated residences shelter at least four proletarian families, with lodgers and lice complete. The poverty is heavy and demoralising, and in the dingiest part of this smutty region, that part which flanks the muddy banks of the filthy canal, ugliness and squalor reign supreme. The drab dens display the endless fierce struggle for existence, and in the gutters the health and innocence of children are wasted and killed. It is a veritable plague spot, "a land not fit for negroes to live in."

Prior to 1914 there was a ring of propaganda stations stoutly maintained in this area, and with the sound branches of Paddington, Kilburn and Kensington in active service, the Socialist Party and its principles were well supported. The "war to end war" brought about the suspension of these activities, and when this military holocaust was ended for the time being, an attempt was made to broadcast the Socialist Party's message at the street corner. The temper of the heroes was not inclined towards Socialist education and organisation. The aftermath of the war had left them at a loose end in the political arena and the crafty Communists made play with it. They went in for heroics and for unemployed stunts. In North Paddington the working class had been so saddened with capitalist dope that they actually threw away 6,000 votes on a worthless Liberal candidate, and this was done AFTER he had been publicly denounced as an impostor, exposed and

repudiated by both the local Tory and Liberal associations as an adventurer. He was destined to occupy a cell at Wormwood Scrubs instead of a seat at Westminster.

With this display of lightheadedness to remember, efforts were again made to re-start Socialist propaganda, and at last the branch has been reopened. A perfect resurrection has to be recorded. Will old members get busy and take their place again in the ranks? We have a clear aim and a policy which is on the right lines. If you still agree with us in this propaganda, then have no hesitation in joining and help us to build up a political party for the emancipation of labour. The party welcomes into its ranks everyone who sincerely believes in the establishment of the Socialist commonwealth as the only means of evolving order from the present social chaos. We exist to convert the great mass of workers to the Socialist point of view. We are the English section of the International workers of the world, and our great mission is to trail the way to economic freedom, our business is to end wage slavery.

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KNOWLEDGE.

The following Books can be obtained from Head Office:—

Anarchism and Socialism. Plechanoff. 3/6, paper 1/2.

Civil War in France. Marx 2/9.

Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844.
Engels. 5/-

Critique of Political Economy. Marx. 6/6.

18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon. Marx. 3/6.

Evolution of Property. Lafargue. 3/6, limp 1/6.

Origin of the Family, Private Property and the
State. Engels. 3/6.

Poverty of Philosophy. Marx. 6/6.

Revolution and Counter-Revolution. Marx. 3/6,
limp 1/6.

Social and Philosophical Studies. Lafargue. 3/6.

Socialism: Utopian and Scientific. Engels. 3/6,
limp 1/6. Postage extra.

HOW WE CIVILISE THE 'HEATHEN.'

A correspondent asks for authoritative evidence to refute the suggestion that the introduction of Christianity and western civilisation into "backward" countries provides the benefit of a higher moral code. Our correspondent realises with us that this aspect is relatively a minor one subordinate always to the dominating fact that the lust which took white traders and factory owners to the lands of the black and yellow races is the same as that which governs their relations with white workers at home—the lust to exploit. The results, though they may vary in certain respects, are much the same and include in both cases the use of the whip of poverty to compel working-class women to sell their bodies for the pleasure of their masters.

During 1924 a question was raised on many occasions in the House of Commons as to the system of maintaining officially registered brothels in Hong Kong. Thus in reply to Lady Astor the Colonial Secretary, Mr. J. H. Thomas, stated (Hansard, July 15th, 1924) "the total number of registered brothels in 1923 was 296, but I am not aware of the dates at which any of them were opened."

Earlier in the year (Hansard, March 17th), Mr. Snell asked Mr. Thomas "whether he is aware that it is part of the duties of a Government official in Hong Kong to pass young girls into the various classes of brothels in that colony; and whether he proposes taking any action in the matter?"

To this plain question Mr. J. H. Thomas returned the following evasive answer: "The object of the practice to which my Hon. Friend refers is purely protective," and on March 24th when again asked if he would abolish the system Mr. Thomas replied "We have to deal with it in a commonsense way." On that day, he also disclosed the fact that our Government carried on the same State enterprise in Malaya.

It is an old story but perhaps in this connection it may not be out of place to refer to the activities in this direction of the late Lord Roberts of infamous memory.

In 1886 he sent out to every quartermaster in the Indian army a circular memorandum containing the following instructions:—

"In the regimental bazaars it is necessary to have a sufficient number of women,

to take care they are sufficiently attractive, to provide them with proper houses, and above all to insist upon means of ablution being always available.

"If young soldiers are carefully advised in regard to the advantage of ablution and recognise that convenient arrangements exist in the regimental bazaar they may be expected to avoid the risks involved in association with women who are not recognised by the regimental authorities." (It may be remarked in passing that the results for the young soldiers were almost as deadly as for the unfortunate women.)

Full particulars of this practice in India are contained in "The Queen's Daughters in India," from which the above and the following quotations are taken:—

"The orders specified were faithfully carried out under the supervision of commanding officers, and were to this effect. The commanding officer gave orders to his quartermaster to arrange with the regimental official to take two policemen (without uniform) and go into the villages and take from the houses of these poor people their daughters from fourteen years upward, about 12 to 15 girls at a time. They were to select the best looking. Next morning they were all put in front of the colonel and quartermaster. The former made his selection of the number required. They were then presented with a pass or licence and then made over to the old woman in charge of this house of vice under the Government. The women already there who were found diseased had their passes taken away from them and were then removed by the police out of the cantonment and these fresh, innocent girls put in their places—to go the same way home."

In conclusion it only needs to be pointed out that this particular expression of the higher Christian morality is not the monopoly of Great Britain. H.

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BRANCH DIRECTORY.

BATTERSEA.—Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Rd. Discussion second Thurs. in month.

BECONTREE.—Branch meets Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at Ashton Hall, High Road, Chadwell Heath, Essex. Communications to S. Cash, at above address. Public invited.

BIRMINGHAM.—Communications to E. Jesper, 36, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st & 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.

CENTRAL.—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

CLERKENWELL.—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

EAST LONDON.—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.

EDINBURGH.—Communications to Andrew Porter, 12a, Kings-rd., Portobello.

GLASGOW.—Communications to Sec., J. Higgins, 816, Rutherglen-rd., Oatlands, Glasgow.

HACKNEY.—Branch meets Saturdays, 7 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare Street, Hackney. Discussions after Branch Business. Communications to Secretary at above address.

HANLEY.—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock St., Hanley, Staffs.

HULL.—Branch meetings, Sunday, at 3 p.m., at the Trade and Labour Club (Jarrait Street entrance). Discussion after meeting. All readers in Hull requested to attend. Communications to Sec., G. Vincrad, 40, Brook Street, Hull.

ISLINGTON.—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to N. A. Bishop, 39, Poyning-rd., N.19.

LEYTON.—Communications to A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.

MANCHESTER.—Communication to Secretary, W. Addison, 111, West Park Street, Salford.

PADDINGTON.—Branch meets Fridays at 7 p.m., at Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn Lane. Communications to G. Shears, 200, Shirland Road, Paddington, W.9.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.—Communications to Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

TOOTING.—Sec., A. Yeomans, 15, University-rd., Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m.

TOTTENHAM.—Secretary 22, Dunloe-road, N.15. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

WALTHAMSTOW.—Communications to S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

WATFORD.—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

WEST HAM.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

WOOD GREEN. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

Declaration of Principles.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No. 271. Vol. 23.]

LONDON, MARCH, 1927.

[MONTHLY, TWO PENCE.]

CAN TRADE UNIONISM SAVE THE WORKERS?

One welcome result of the mining lockout of 1926 is a revived interest in proposals to reorganise the Miners' Union and draw up new programmes. Chiefly, the discussion centres round the substitution of one national union for the existing loose federation of county associations. It is not the purpose of this article to examine the details of any of the proposed schemes; the miners themselves can best do that. It is, however, not inopportune to state some general considerations which are too little present in the minds of many trade unionists. First, it need hardly be stated that any change making for an increase in the strength and efficiency of working-class organisations should, and does, receive the support of the Socialist. The elimination of the present multiplicity of miners' unions can hardly fail to strengthen the miners in their struggles with the employers, and is therefore a wise step. Against that, however, it must not be assumed that the setting up of one organisation in place of several will in itself solve the problems of the miners. One great union which is internally divided into warring groups is no more effective than 10 small bodies similarly divided. Clear heads and a united purpose are worth more than all the machinery that was ever devised. Apathy would undermine a single union one million members strong and paralyse it as a striking force just as surely as it would the separate bodies in a federation, and apathy is a danger particularly to be feared in the formation of big centralised organisations whether political, trade union, or any other. As the point of control recedes from the locality to the more distant centre, so the member is apt to lose personal touch and interest, especially if the machinery makes him feel that decisions are made above his head by an executive over which

he has no effective hold. The danger is great, because there is a common and plausible doctrine among the more active elements that national organisation is of little value unless it is accompanied by centralised and more or less arbitrary power in the hands of a small executive group. The theory—based on analogy with the machinery of the fighting forces—is that industrial struggles demand quick decisions, and that these are incompatible with complete democracy. Can a union afford to lose precious time consulting its members before calling a strike, or afford to have negotiations hampered by the necessity of submitting offers to rank and file vote? Answering these questions in the negative, many advocates of national organisation find themselves committed willy nilly to something savouring of dictatorship. This we are sure would be a fatal mistake.

In fact, especially in such an industry as mining, the need for quick decision is greatly exaggerated. True, the miners have almost invariably found themselves striking months after the employers had taken every precaution by accumulating enormous stocks of coal, but this has been the fault, not of democratic machinery, but of indecision and proneness to accept the specious time-gaining arguments of the owners or of the Government, or of the leaders of the Labour Party.

Ballots of members need not take long, and any slight delay is amply repaid if by such means the members can be kept actively interested in the course of any threatened dispute. Another essential means to this end is that negotiations with employers be completely reported to the members stage by stage and endorsed by them, so that they know to the full that they are responsible for decisions taken by the dele-

gates they instruct and have the duty of keeping themselves fully informed.

This, we are told, is cumbersome, but it is infinitely less disastrous than to have half-hearted strikers and men who do not know when to strike or when to leave off—the latter perhaps the most tragic of all.

And this brings us to the wider question of the power of trade unions. Upon what considerations should trade unions act and what should be their aims? Is it good to fight merely "because our case is just"? Is the sympathy of the "general public" worth anything? Should trade unions support the Labour Party? And can they solve all of the economic problems of the working class? We, as Socialists, would answer all of these questions with a decided No!

The most powerful—in fact almost the sole—weapon of the trade union is the ability to withhold their labour, but in the nature of things, this can have only limited effect. The worker is up against semi-starvation almost immediately he strikes. The employer faces no such threat. The worker can be starved into surrender. The employer cannot. This would seem to be an obvious statement, but rarely are trade-union policies based upon it. They are unconsciously based upon the false notion that employees and employer meet upon equal terms, and that an undefined something called "justice" will prevail. In truth they meet as property owners with security versus a propertyless class always living from hand to mouth. In addition, and this is decisive, the property owners have behind them all political machinery of the State. The working class sell their labour-power to the employing class. What the trade unions can do is to secure somewhat more advantageous terms in the sale of that labour-power than could be obtained by individual bargaining, and they can also act as a protection for individuals against victimisation. Sometimes employers rather than lose profits and break contracts will yield to the threat of a strike. Sometimes, as is shown by the thriving American custom of paying Labour leaders to call their members out on strike in slack times, no pressure whatever can be brought to bear on employers by the threat of a strike. And always the effect of the pressure is circumscribed. The margin of wage increase which it will pay the employer to give is conditioned by his estimate of the cost of starving his workers

into submission, less the increased profit he will gain through lower wages. In almost every industry and at all times another limit is imposed by the possibility of substituting machinery for labour. To pay a higher wage to a small number of workers giving the same or greater output by the use of better machinery is almost always a means at the employers' disposal for countering a movement in favour of higher wages.

These, then, are the limits within which trade unions function. The state of the market should be of chief importance when considering the advisability of a strike. "Justice" is irrelevant and meaningless, and "public sympathy" is a broken reed.

Trade unions are useful and necessary within capitalism, but can they abolish the wages system which of necessity involves the exploitation and poverty of the workers. Obviously, no! To do so requires the acquisition for society of the means of wealth production, and this in turn can only be done when the majority of the workers become socialist and decide to obtain control of the machinery of government for the express purpose of depriving the present propertied class of all their property privileges. A minority of workers cannot by either political or economic action stand up against the forces of the State. A majority can obtain control of those forces through control of Parliament. Economic organisation can aid, but it cannot substitute political organisation.

Here it may be asked why we oppose the Labour Party and urge trade unionists to do the same. The miners in particular should appreciate the first part of the answer. When the Labour Party went into office in 1924 the miners were instantly appealed to through the official "Labour Magazine" not to embarrass the Government by making demands for higher wages. The justification for trade unions is that they help the workers under capitalism. Anyone or any organisation, trade union or political, which urges the workers not to take advantage of any opportunity which offers itself is deserving only of working-class hostility. That is the position of the Labour Party.

Secondly, as has been pointed out, the workers can solve their problems only by gaining control of Parliament for THE EXPRESS PURPOSE OF INTRODUCING SOCIALISM. A party which seeks

to gain political control for any other purpose must therefore be anti-socialist and anti-working class. The Labour Party seeks to gain control for a variety of reforms, including such capitalist schemes as nationalisation. Some reforms may in themselves be good, most are indifferent and some, like nationalisation, are for the working class wholly bad. But whether good, bad, or indifferent, they are not Socialism, and do not, and cannot, aid in hastening Socialism. Socialism presupposes a socialist working class. The propagation of reforms does not make socialists. First, it makes reformers and then drives them through disillusion to despair. The Labour Party has not socialist aims. Its guiding belief is in its ability to administer capitalism better than the capitalists themselves. This may be true, but it is not Socialism. Trade unions, both from the point of view of progress to Socialism, and in the day-to-day struggle will gain, not lose, by severing their connection with the Labour Party. In fact, while their members are politically divided, as at present, the trade unions would gain in cohesion and effectiveness by concentration on trade-union objects, leaving politics alone until the organised working class is ready to use Parliament for socialist instead of reformist purposes.

H.

NOTE.

Plechanoff's articles on "The Monistic Conception of History" are temporarily discontinued due to non-receipt of translation. A further statement will be made in next issue.

* * *

NOTES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

F. Baldwin.—Reply next month.

W. Nicholls.—Too late for this issue. Questions will be answered in next issue.

F. L. Remington (Leicester).—The point about local government has been already dealt with in previous answers to you in S.S., and unless you have any fresh questions on the subject it would serve no purpose to repeat our replies.

* * *

RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.

R. OWEN.—A New View of Society. Everyman Library. Dent. 2/-

BARBUSSE.—Under Fire. Everyman Library. Dent. 2/-

Modern Communism. By REV. L. WATT, S. J. Catholic Truth Society. (No price stated).

THE SOURCE OF WEALTH.

Capital is wealth used in a way that profit results from such use. Strictly speaking, capital is money invested. Unless money be invested in factories, machinery, raw material and labour-power no profit will come to capital. The origin of profit has to be sought in the nature of labour-power. The labourer is paid less than the value he adds to the article he produces—here is the whole secret of capital and the source from which flows the mighty revenues of the multi-millionaires.

Factories are built, machinery is constructed, raw material is obtained by working men and women applying their energies to the material Mother Nature so lavishly provides. Money itself, that which the capitalist invests and which appears to have a magic power of self-expansion, is also obtained by the application of human energy to natural resources. In fact, without the raw material and human energy there is no economic wealth at all. These two things together are alone the source of all economic wealth, in spite of the wonderful tales of the mysterious power attached to capital. Before capital was thought of wealth was produced; after capital has taken its place beside the other relics of past epochs wealth will still be produced.

While the shipbuilder builds the floating palace, other workers in other industries are making those things that are necessary so that he may eat, drink, clothe and house himself until such time as his work is completed. This is an instance of what is happening in all directions. Workers supplement each other's efforts in various ways so that society shall live. People in this country make articles that are required in the tropics. People at the equator produce products required in temperate regions. Often the raw material comes from one region and is worked up in several other regions before taking its final shape for use. In fact, so much are the products of to-day the result of social effort, that if an article be picked up and inspected it will generally be impossible to determine how many regions of the earth were concerned in its production.

And what of the fruitful beast of burden by means of whose labour these products exist in such prolific quantities? The worker does not own his product, it belongs to the owners of capital. The more

wages the capitalist pays, and the more waste there is, for a given amount of production, the less profit the capitalist reaps. Thus the capitalist has a great interest in low wages and peace in industry.

Everything is done to make the worker more fruitful, docile and cheap. Technical instruction is boomed because a better educated worker means higher skill, better organisation and, consequently, more products, with the expenditure of less energy. A recent development with the same object is the increasing attention given to industrial psychology.

In this latter direction, astonishing results have been recorded, as the following quotation indicates:—

Increases of output, varying from five to as much as forty per cent., have been obtained by our methods in such industries as coal-mining, engineering, tinplate, weaving, spinning, cabinet-making, calico printing, seed-crushing, dress-making, the manufacture of margarine, rubber and fancy goods and confectionery.—(Dr. Charles S. Myers, Director of the National Institute of Industrial Psychology, quoted by the *Observer*, 8/11/25.)

Many and various are the methods adopted to ensure the workers' docility. Large firms spend huge sums equipping sports grounds and organising welfare work. Health Insurance, Old Age Pensions, Widows' Pensions, Unemployment Insurance, and the like, are really capitals' insurance against rebellion. They minimise the danger that is always on the doorstep. Formerly, these needs were met in charitable ways, now they are all organised in a way that makes them cheaper, more effective, keeps the worker less dissatisfied while at the same time binding him tighter to the wheel of capital by bonds of fear.

At its best, capitals' ideal for the worker is to make of him a fruitful and contented *slave*, content to remain a beast of burden while his master enjoys the earth and the fulness thereof. GILMAC.

A LECTURE

By J. FITZGERALD

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EFFICIENCY AND ITS ECONOMIC RESULTS.

A problem ever present with the capitalist class is to find markets where they can profitably dispose of their commodities.

In this endeavour, they seize upon every opportunity that will enable them to undersell a competitor. Science is exploited in both industry and agriculture. Improved machinery is introduced, often before the old plant is worn out, and the workers are speeded up to keep time with the increasing pace of the new methods.

The geographical limits of the world, and the entrance of the one-time commercially backward customers as competitors in the world's markets, makes this competition keener.

Trusts and combines are formed to secure control of raw materials and to remove competition between certain manufacturers, in order to compete more effectively with others.

The more intensive cultivation of the soil and the development of the gigantic powers of production necessary in order to produce cheaply, and by this means to secure markets, lands the capitalist class in a curious position. The markets they endeavour to extend by the aid of cheap products are contracted by the methods adopted to reduce the cost of these products.

For example, if a market will absorb the commodities produced in a year by a combine of manufacturers, and they, in competition with others, adopt new methods so that the goods which were produced in a year can now be produced in eight months then, if all other things remain the same as before, the demands of the market can now be met by eight months' production which would mean four months' unemployment for that group of manufacturers. Of course, the cheaper production *may*—though not necessarily—be accompanied by lower prices. But unless the total of this fall in prices equal the total of the previous prices of four months' production, it is clear that unemployment would be increased by approximately the difference between the two totals.

The growth in the applications of science and the general powers of production proceeds at a far faster rate than the growth in the capacity of the markets to absorb the products. Consequently an ever-growing

army of unemployed has become a permanent feature of capitalist society.

But still the cry for greater efficiency goes on. Press and platform are used to deceive the worker into believing that this speeding up is necessary in order that there should be sufficient produced, from which he can draw his miserable pittance. And they conceal the fact that production for profit is the cause of this mad scramble for speed, resulting in greater unemployment, misery and premature death of the wealth producers.

Well to the front of this lying mob, stand the leaders of the Labour Party, competing with each other to win applause from the social parasites with whom they glory to associate.

A recent example of this toadyism comes from J. R. Clynes. Speaking at the Textile Exhibition in Manchester, he said that:

A sound doctrine for the worker, is to give honestly and fully a fair day's work for a fair day's pay.

The best interests of the workers lie in the acceptance of the doctrine that unrestricted output with accepted humane terms of labour is unquestionably in the worker's interest. Their chance of better conditions is greater under a state of abundance than it possibly could be under a state of scarcity. Scarcity is the intimate friend of the profiteer.

By the use of the antiquated slogan of "A fair day's work for a fair day's pay" Clynes gives a demonstration of the condition of his own mentality. Apparently he is not aware that the only condition upon which the workers can receive wages is by submitting to a process of exploitation, in which they are robbed of the greater portion of the wealth produced. To talk of "fair wages" is therefore absurd.

Equally misleading and absurd is the statement that unrestricted output is of benefit to the workers. The state of abundance this "unrestricted output" is supposed to create does not necessarily follow. Directly the demand for his commodities shows signs of falling off the employer slows up or stops production, which means short time or unemployment for the workers, and the more efficient the workers the more frequent and prolonged these periods become.

In Agriculture the control of supplies is not so easy. The individual farmer endeavours to get the most possible out of every acre he cultivates, and hopes that he alone will be successful. If an abundant crop is

general the benefit that he would secure from a good harvest is lost owing to the resultant fall in prices.

The general success of the American cotton growers has landed them in difficulties.

It is estimated that on cotton alone the loss on this season's crop will be £80,000,000, and that thousands of farmers are practically in a state of bankruptcy, and are at the mercy of small banks.—(*Daily News*, Oct. 9th, 1926.)

And in the same item of news we are told that:—

The Government has arranged a loan of £6,000,000 to enable the cotton farmers to hold back cotton from the markets, and, by artificially reducing the supply, to increase prices.

And further:—

In addition to the plan for withholding the present crop and feeding it slowly into the market at inflated prices proposals are being made for limiting next year's crop.

One proposal is that next year's crop shall be cut 25 per cent. by limiting sowing.

Such are the benefits that flow to the workers from a state of abundance. Supplies are held back to increase prices, and the prospect of 25 per cent. less ground cultivated, means that approximately 25 per cent. of the people employed in cotton growing will be thrown out of work.

The capitalists will allow the workers to starve sooner than sacrifice their profit. Fish has been thrown back into the sea, and fruit left to rot in the orchards, because it did not pay to market them.

Only by the workers establishing a system of society in which the means of wealth production will be owned in common, and wealth produced for use and not for profit, can this paradoxical position of starvation in the midst of plenty end, and abundance become a means to general happiness. E.L.

THE 23rd ANNUAL PARTY CONFERENCE

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SCIENCE v. SPIRITISM.

To The Editor.

I really did not intend that last letter I sent you, for publication. However, as you did print it, it gave me an opportunity of reading your reply, and for this further communication on what you must admit is an important subject.

The difficulty about evidence on psychic matters is that it is so inaccessible to most people: Socialists, especially, are too busy to give time to investigation. Therefore I did not intend any disrespect to you when I said you were not well up in the subject. If you were you would not oppose science to psychical research, as you do when you write: "Science is based upon knowledge and knowledge only. Observation, experiment, classification, generalisation, are its methods," implying that these methods are not used in the demonstrations of spiritualism. There are over forty vols. of the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research available for study, and the evidence there recorded is based on the scientific method.

Anthropology, archæology, and ethnography, have moved since the days of the scientists you name, and all the latest views and discoveries confirm the knowledge given by the occultists!

Why object to discoveries because they appear to be archaic? Have you read the chapter on Communism in Hyndman's book, "The Evolution of Revolution"?

A scientist of the standing of Charles Richet said, in "Nature" lately; "Our intelligence is reached by forces that disclose facts which neither sight, hearing, nor touch, could reveal."

If Socialists object to taking the plunge straight away into survival and spirit communication, let them begin by studying the question of the supernormal powers of man. Is there anything unreasonable in asking them to do this?

Yours fraternally,

ISABEL KINGSLEY.

By the way, you wouldn't send anyone to Sir Ernest Benn for arguments for Socialism, and Joseph McCabe and Edward Clodd are in the same category with regard to psychism.

REPLY TO ISABEL KINGSLEY.

After carefully evading our exposures and criticisms of her pamphlet and letter, Isabel Kingsley gaily sets off on a fresh path of assumptions and misrepresentations. We might demand, in fairness to our readers, that she should attempt to deal with our previous replies before introducing fresh matter. As, however, she has shown no inclination to follow such a course, it may be as well to point out the fallacies in the above letter.

First. As every reader of the December, 1926 *Socialist Standard* knows, I not only do not admit that Spiritism is an "important" subject, but stated distinctly that it was only a "stumbling block to be cleared out of the way."

Second. Isabel Kingsley's pamphlet was not written in defence of "psychical research," but of Spiritism—a wholly different thing—and it was Spiritism we attacked. Even then her case is rotten. The Society for Psychical Research was founded by Spiritists to back up the claims of Spiritists by a show of investigation. And, as their greatest investigator said, when dealing with the report of a Committee who, on one occasion, examined the infamous Eusapia Palladino:—

"It is to be understood, of course, that in investigating phenomena of this kind . . . the investigators impose their own conditions at their own risk. . . . If the Committee had begun by putting the medium into an iron cage they might have ended with nothing for their money." (F. Podmore, *Newer Spiritualism*, p. 115.)

In practically every case the medium dictates the conditions of the séance. This is not "scientific method," it is just barefaced fraud. Where the investigators insist upon elaborate precautions, the watchers get "nothing for their money."

The forty volumes referred to by Isabel Kingsley contain an enormous amount of dreary drivel, childish chatter, and imbecile ramblings, but precious little "evidence."

Occasionally a page is brightened, as on P. 133 of Volume VII., where the great God of the Spiritists, F. W. H. Myers, reports the result of an examination of Eusapia Palladino, held at Cambridge.

"I cannot doubt that we observed much conscious and deliberate fraud which must have needed long practice to bring to its present level

of skill I do not think there is adequate reason to suppose that any of the phenomena at Cambridge were genuine."

Third. It is quite true that science has moved since the Victorian days, but I challenge Isabel Kingsley to name *one* scientific discovery that confirms Occultism or Spiritism.

This challenge was given, in a slightly different form, in our original review of the pamphlet (October, 1926, S.S.), and it is significant to note that challenge has been ignored.

Fourth. I made no objection to any "discoveries," archaic or other. All that I did was to point out that what Isabel Kingsley, in her ignorance and mental limitations, thought was new, was really borrowed from primitive man.

Richet's opinion is not scientific evidence and—assuming the quotation is correct, for no date is given—it is for Richet to show how he *knows* these wonderful facts. Moreover, it will be time enough for Socialists to consider studying the "supernormal powers of man when any evidence is brought forward that any such "powers" exist.

The postscript is a further illustration of the poverty of Isabel Kingsley's case, for I never mentioned Edward Clodd's name at all, and Joseph McCabe's only in connection with a debate. Here, however, she has laid herself open to a crushing retort. When reviewing her pamphlet in the October (1926) *Socialist Standard* I showed that, although there were pages of abuse of Marx and the Materialist Conception of History, not a single quotation, or even word, was given from Marx on this subject!

My answer, therefore, is: "No! I should not send anyone to Ernest Benn or Isabel Kingsley for arguments on Socialism, but would send them to Marx."

J. FITZGERALD.

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The Socialist Standard,

MARCH,



1927

IS THE LIVING-WAGE POLICY SOUND?

"The Living Wage" is a pamphlet written by H. N. Brailsford, J. A. Hobson, A. Creech Jones and E. F. Wise, and published by the I.L.P. It takes the form of a report submitted to the National Administrative Council of that party.

The opening chapter is entitled "The place of Wages in a Labour Strategy," and is chiefly concerned with an attempt to strike a balance between the industrialists, on the one hand, and the political socialists, so-called, on the other. The latter, we are told, hope to tackle the problem of a living wage, gradually, by nationalising, as occasion offers, the more essential industries one after the other.

"The New Leader," 21.1.1927, page 7, devotes a column to proving that nationalised industries are run on business lines equal to anything under private enterprise. Expenses are cut down to a minimum, both in the number of employees and the wages paid. It would appear, therefore, that the I.L.P. have sufficient evidence to prove that the workers under nationalised institutions are no better off than those under ordinary capitalist concerns. At any rate, the enquiry now going on into the question of wages and conditions of Post Office employees should cause them to hesitate be-

fore accepting nationalisation as a means to raise wages or improve conditions for the workers.

But the writers of this pamphlet do not base their ideas on facts. To them nationalisation stands for Socialism, and Socialism stands for State control of all industries. According to them the workers remain wage-workers, living by the sale of their labour-power, whatever changes may take place; consequently they say:

"That to nationalise important industries in conditions which resemble those which prevail to-day would be a disappointing and even perilous proceeding." (p. 3.)

We can now see the necessity for "labour strategy," industries must only be nationalised by a Labour Government, when the possibility of raising wages will gain for them additional political kudos. How futile, even, such a policy as this would be is shown by the writers themselves:

"The industry of coal-mining is overmanned, and is carrying to-day a burden of surplus labour of anything over 100,000 men. A national administration would have to make its choice. It might maintain the uneconomic pits, risk the consequences of over-production, and continue to carry the burden of this surplus labour. In that case, it would either pay low wages or require a subsidy. The other alternative before it would be to close down the uneconomic pits and turn a big body of men adrift." (p. 4.)

Exactly! A Labour administration, neither elected for, nor understanding Socialism, would have to face the same responsibilities as the present capitalist Government. They would have to ensure the normal working of the system, including the exploitation of the class they pretend to represent. They could not excuse themselves for extravagance in administration because they have always preached economy in this respect in the workers' interests. To the industrialists the writers say:

"Labour when it sells itself as a commodity in the market must usually accept a price which varies according to its scarcity." (p. 6.)

While this statement is incomplete and unscientific in itself it is, nevertheless, an

admission that wages are not determined by "public opinion" or "ethical principles that have been generally accepted." In the body of the pamphlet there is a good deal of absurdity along these lines. All that kind of sentimental nonsense vanishes before their grudging admission that:

"In the last resort it is on the organised refusal of men to work for less than a living wage that our hope of securing it lies." (p. 7.)

It will be seen from the quotation in reference to coal mines that the writers appear to be impressed with the idea that capitalists are confronted with grave difficulties in the business of making profits. Hence a large portion of the pamphlet is devoted to assisting them with advice on (1) the reorganisation of industry, and (2) how to create a market.

It is now generally accepted that the enormous increase of unemployment in recent years is due to the extended application of machinery and labour-saving devices and methods. Yet the writers specifically stipulate that reorganisation of industry and mass production is a necessary condition of higher wages. They ignore the fact that in order to pay higher wages numbers of workers must be dismissed. They admire American methods, especially Ford's, and seriously advise British capitalists to follow suit. They use the following figures as evidence of American prosperity:

"Mr. Hoover, in the annual report of his department for 1925, has published an official analysis of American prices and wages. Taking 100 as the index of the year 1913, he shows that wholesale prices had risen in 1924 to 150, while wages had risen to 228." (p. 48.)

To understand the significance of this quotation we must first of all recognise that the workers' improvement does not commence until his wages have reached the 150 mark. Moreover, he must buy his necessities at retail prices, which will be much higher. The difference in 1924 was, therefore, only 78 minus the difference between wholesale and retail prices. However, this difference applies to the average worker when lucky enough to be employed. No account whatever is taken of unemployment and its increase resulting from the reorganisation. When reckoning the workers' share of the national income, the writers should have expressed it as a proportional fraction

of the total and not as the average wage of those workers lucky enough to be fully employed.

The facts regarding the Ford methods and the relation of production to wages were dealt with in the S.S. for December, 1926, and need not be repeated here. These facts show conclusively that mass production everywhere returns far less in wages per unit of production, and that it depends upon progressively doing this for its success as a business concern.

The contention of the writers that the higher wages of mass production constitute a market, becomes a myth when we realise that the *total wages bill* is actually reduced by this method.

The writers, however, do not rely entirely on reorganisation to bring about their eldorado. They have two further reforms. First, "An enlightened credit policy," and second, "family allowances." The object of the first, we are told, is to stabilise prices and employment.

"At the first distant signs of a slump, it must be the duty of the bank slightly to expand the volume of credit and to lower its price; at the first distant signs of a boom, it will gently apply restrictive measures. Our assumption is that in this way the price level can be kept steady, and the general level of employment constant."

Their object is clearly stated. It is to wipe out the fluctuations in trade; to reduce trade and consequently production and employment to its mean level. But there is no more water in the sea when its surface is calm than when it is boisterous. Trade is not increased by restricting it when it is inclined to rise and encouraging it when it flags. The volume remains the same. It is only the fluctuations that have been wiped out.

The second reform is easily seen to be useless as a means to increase the purchasing power of the workers. Capitalists and capitalist governments understand business methods too well to be induced to pay for the same thing twice over. If they keep the children by increased taxation through the State machinery, wages can be reduced to the cost of keeping man and wife.

This is clearly shown in the pamphlet under review. A scheme drawn up by an Australian Federal Commission is instanced. The Commission estimated the weekly sum necessary for a family of 5 persons to be

£5 16s. When it was shown by the Federal Statistician that such a sum would absorb all profits, the Commission reviewed their figures and suggested a wage of £4 for man and wife with an allowance of 12s. for each dependent child.

Here, then, is an actual case, quoted by the writers themselves, where a Commission evidently favourably inclined towards the workers, did exactly what the capitalist would be expected to do. Moreover, it is obvious that the writers have this result in mind all the time. They say:

"It is important to note that family allowances provide the only hopeful method of realising the ideal of 'equal pay for equal work' as between women and men. There would, for example, be no reasonable objection to equal salaries for men and women teachers if the children of married teachers were provided for in this way." (p. 26.)

In other words, the salaries of men teachers could be reduced to the level of women if they were relieved of the responsibility of keeping their children.

The net result of the three reforms: re-organisation of industry, stabilisation, and family allowances, so far as the workers are concerned, is a balance on the wrong side. Reorganisation increases unemployment, stabilisation does nothing, one way or the other, while family allowances merely reduce the employers' wages costs.

But the futility of the reforms is nothing compared to the harm done to the workers by the publication of the work. Apart from the confusion it engenders, the real relations of capitalists and workers, the class antagonism, is glossed over and smothered. It puts on one side the opposing interests of the two classes and holds out the bait of a prosperous industry that will enrich capitalists and keep the workers fully employed.

It is an attempt to persuade the workers that it is possible so to reform the capitalist system that there will be no occasion to work for its abolition. Under mass production, stabilisation, and family allowances, the workers would find their interests identical with their masters'. Yet the writers of this work call themselves "Socialists." If they have not written it with the deliberate intention of confusing the workers, they should begin at once to try and understand what Socialism means.

SOCIALISM OR CHINESE NATIONALISM?

Although our attitude towards Chinese Nationalism has been stated several times, there are still readers who do not understand it or cannot reconcile it with what they supposed to be the socialist point of view.

Let us first separate two quite distinct questions which have unfortunately been confused in the agitation carried on by various wings of the Labour Party: First, ought the workers to support wars waged by capitalist States, including a possible war in China? Secondly, should the workers support nationalist movements, aimed at securing national independence, including the struggle to rid China of foreign control?

The only socialist answer in both cases is an unambiguous no! We support no capitalist war and we support no nationalist movement.

Where the capitalist economic system exists (whether the government is Conservative, Liberal or Labour) armed forces are maintained for the protection of capitalist private property and capitalist interests generally. Foreign trade is one of the forces constantly creating friction with other capitalist competing countries and with "backward" races which are unfortunate enough to dwell in parts of the earth endowed with rich natural resources. When the governing sections of the capitalist class think their interests seriously menaced they set the armed forces in motion either at home or abroad. Those armed forces are organised and controlled by these governing sections and **THEY ARE NEVER USED FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE THAN THE PROTECTION OF CAPITALIST INTERESTS.** Wars waged by capitalist State involves, therefore, no working-class issue, and on no account would socialists support them. The Socialist Party alone in this country consistently opposed the last war on socialist grounds, and opposes any and every capitalist war. The particular circumstances are to us a matter of supreme indifference. The German invasion of Belgium, the French occupation of the Saar, the Chinese threat to Shanghai, the Russian attempts to damage the British Empire, Irish or Indian or Egyptian demands for independence, Mexican threats to the property of oil companies, each and

every one leaves us cold. In every instance the driving motive is the desire to seize or to protect capitalist private property. Capitalist States fight only over the division of the loot obtained by the exploitation of wage workers. We are wage workers and are only concerned with the abolition of exploitation.

But to come to the second question, if we will not fight to prevent the German capitalist class from plundering the Belgian and British capitalist class, we most emphatically will not assist Irish, Indian, German or Chinese capitalists against British capitalists. We are interested in one kind of struggle only, class struggle, and primarily in that phase which consists in the endeavour by wage earners to overthrow capitalist private property and all forms of the wages system. The national movements blazing away in different parts of the world are not working-class, but capitalist, in their aim. We therefore oppose them. Patriotism has the effect of binding together the classes in each geographical area. Socialists desire that conflicting class interests shall be recognised, not obscured.

Socialism and patriotism are irreconcilably antagonistic. Patriotism is anti-working class and Chinese nationalism is no less so than is British. The one encourages the other. We wish to strangle both.

The Labour Party leads the workers to believe that hostility to a war with China implies the necessity of supporting Chinese nationalism. This is an anti-socialist attitude. Nationalism is merely an aspect of the rise of capitalism. Its history is a tragic record of working-class lives lost, working-class energies wasted and self-sacrifice betrayed. It has no relieving feature; it has brought no material gain to the workers. Nationalism has ever in the long run proved a treacherous basis for working-class organisation. In the capitalist French Revolution the great majority of the victims of the guillotine were not aristocrats but workers. The French commercial class did not hesitate to slaughter the misguided wage-earners who interpreted Liberty as meaning the Liberty of themselves.

In the revolutions which swept over Europe in 1848 under the twin capitalist cries of Democracy and Nationalism, the workers who fought under capitalist leadership were invariably betrayed and their hopes disappointed whenever the demands of the

capitalists against their Feudal enemies were wholly or partly conceded. What have Italian or Balkan workers gained by the blood they poured out winning "freedom" from Austria and Turkey? In our own day, what have Irish workers benefited by the years of assassination and guerilla warfare against the armed forces of the British capitalist state? Does any intelligent observer believe for one moment that Irish, or Polish, or Indian, or Egyptian, or Chinese capitalists are one whit less brutal in their exploitation of their workers than are British, or German, or American, or any other Imperialist capitalist class?

The Chinese workers will be no better off when they have exchanged British and Japanese for Chinese masters. The Chinese workers are few in comparison with the enormous mass of peasants; they are not, or at best only weakly, organised. They cannot impose their will on the Nationalist Movement and, if they cannot do so now, much less will they be able to do so when Chinese Capitalism, flushed with victory over its foreign enemies, turns its attention to the paramount home problem of keeping the workers in subjection. After generations of struggle and experience, the British and other European trade union movements are impotent to control their own sections of the capitalist class, yet their leaders do not hesitate to assume that the Chinese workers have done this or will succeed in doing so in a year or two.

We have already in these pages given the evidence of unprejudiced observers as to the essentially capitalist origin and aims of the Cantonese movement. To reply, as some of their apologists do, that the organised Chinese workers support this movement, is evidence only of the political inexperience of the Chinese workers. We have hardly had time to forget that in 1914 the organised workers in Europe rushed madly into the slaughter under their respective national flags. Will anyone now suggest that this is proof of the non-capitalist origins and objects of that war? And, further, can anyone assert that the working class gained anything whatever by their support? Many of those who were preaching hatred then in the name of Nationalism and in the service of the capitalist class, are now parading the same anti-socialist principles on behalf of China. Ben Tillett "hailing the new spirit in China" on the platform of the Albert Hall (Daily Herald 7th February), and being

rapturously cheered by workers, is as pitiful a spectacle as was shown during the war, when similar unthinking people were misled by the same Ben Tillett, while he was earning an honest penny on the music halls, devoting his oratorical gifts to inflaming bestial passions with filthy lies about German atrocities.

Merely to assume that the enemies of British capitalists are necessarily the friends of socialism is too shallow to need refutation, but another cause of confusion about China is the fact that the Russian Government is actively supporting the Kuomintang Party. What must be remembered is that the Russian Government has other reasons for its activity besides its direct working-class sympathies. Russian foreign policy, for instance, led to some kind of tacit understanding with Fascist Italy, because, for a time, both Russia and Italy happened to be at loggerheads with Rumania. And, in China, while the Bolsheviks have no illusions about the Nationalist Movement, they do urgently want a strong independent China, able to resist European and particularly British influences in the East.

Lewis S. Gannett, writing on his visit to China in the *New Masses* (New York, February, 1927, an "unofficial" Communist journal), has the following:—

"The Russians . . . want to see in China a strong National State which will resist the encroachments of those Western States which Russia perceives regards as enemies; and they know full well that a semi-bourgeois Nationalist China, if strong, will mean far more help to Soviet Russia than a struggling little Communist nucleus, pure but ineffective," and again

"They [the Russians] know perfectly well that there is no more chance of a Communist revolution in China to-day than there was in America in 1776."

According to Gannett there are only some 3,000 Communists in China.

A recent Thesis of the Communist International on the Chinese question, states that no less than five out of six of the Commissars of the Kuomintang Party belong to the right wing, i.e., represent purely capitalist interests, recognising, however, that at present they cannot dispense with working-class support.

(For extracts from Thesis, see *Manchester Guardian*, 14th February.)

Further, leaders of the daily press will have noticed that various religious organisations are supporting the Nationalist Movement. The Executive of the National Christian Council, "which represents the

vast majority of Protestant Churches in China and the great majority of Missionary Societies, British, American and Continental," has issued a manifesto declaring that they "share in the Nationalist aspirations . . . They are prepared to accept risks and even to face persecution rather than oppose the most hopeful movement in modern China." (*Manchester Guardian*, 14th February). A working-class movement, whether in China or England, would not move organised religious movements to such enthusiasm.

There is a last and fairly powerful argument in favour of supporting Nationalist Movements. It is true that the existence of foreign control enables capitalist politicians to blame the evils of their system on to the "foreigner." Thus it was not until Ireland became "free" that Irish workers fully learned what Irish capitalists are capable of. Against this, however, must be placed the great harm wrought by the exaggeration of national feeling, and hatred of foreigners. This breeds a state of mind quite unsuited to working-class organisation and saps the solidarity of members of the working-class to each other. It cannot be doubted that the virtual suspension of organised trade union activities in Ireland during the Civil War and in England during the "Great" War, enormously weakened the strength of the organisations concerned, and buried their avowed objects under masses of the vilest war propaganda.

True, it is not easy to oppose mass patriotic movements, whether in Ireland, or England, or China, but that difficulty is not removed by closing one's eyes to it, nor is it lessened by postponing it until "after the war." If those who wish to organise and educate the Chinese workers lend themselves to Nationalist propaganda now, they will find it immeasurably more difficult to return to working-class principles after they have won for their masters the reality and for themselves the illusion of Chinese independence. Our advice to the Chinese workers is to build up organisations to fight their own capitalist class—they will need them soon enough. Our advice to British workers is to acquaint themselves with their own class interests and get rid of the two illusions that organisations which have suffered for five or six years an almost unbroken series of defeats at home at the hands of the powerful British ruling class, is able, by passing resolutions, to dictate foreign policy to its

masters, or wise to urge young movements like the Chinese, to follow the disastrous British policies, which have brought such tragic results.

WHY NOT JOIN US?

There are readers of the "Socialist Standard" and supporters of the party in the districts around London and in the Provinces who feel too far from any centre of party activity to think it worth while joining us. There are others again who, while agreeing with us, yet have a fancy that we are "intellectuals" or "too tolerant." To such I address the following few lines:

Those who are waiting until the party grows in strength in different places would be wise to remember that not only must there be a beginning with someone, but also there may be quite a number like themselves in a district just waiting for someone else to get going. If all those who agree with us join up, we can put members in a given district in touch with each other in order to form a branch. It is much more interesting and useful to work in harness with others than in isolation.

There is no mystery about the principles, policy or internal organisation of our party; there are no cliques or job-hunters. The party's methods are too democratic to allow of that. We are a group of working men and women who have laid down a set of principles and a policy that are clear and definite, and are carried out by methods that leave no room for the crafty to achieve either position or pelf. All our meetings are open to the public, because we have nothing to hide and no wire-pulling to take part in.

We are not "intellectuals"; we just know what we want and are determined to get it. We are neither intolerant nor bitter towards our fellow workers. We know that the mass of those who support the Labour Party, the Communist Party and others, are honest, sincere, and self-sacrificing in their efforts. It is the foundation and policy of the other parties that is wrong, and that allows groups of self-seekers to climb on the backs of their fellows and to twist the enthusiasm of the workers to their own private ends.

There are "Labour Leaders" who are sincere though misguided, but, in the main, it is the trickster who flourishes in the "Labour Movement" and forms close

corporations for the sharing of offices and emoluments. We are only intolerant and bitterly opposed to the existing order of society and the shams in which it cloaks its fierce oppression.

Where a few members are congregated in a district they have the many advantages organisation confers. For instance, bundles of specimen copies of the "S.S."—back numbers—can be sent to help them in their propagandist efforts.

Recently, workers in Paddington, in Becontree and in Hull have been enrolled in the party and joined into branches which have enabled them not only to take advantage of the benefits of organisation, but also to get in close touch with us all and to see how democratic and above board the internal work of the party is.

We are steadily growing in strength, and hope soon to be able to record new branches in other places, such as Reading and Sheffield, Woolwich and Sittingbourne. Here and there throughout the world we have associates of a similar outlook to ourselves who are endeavouring to form parties abroad on similar lines to our own.

Now reader and fellow-worker, what about joining up with us and helping on the good work? We offer you, among other things, our comradeship in a cause that is worth your best efforts and enthusiasm.

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THE PEOPLE'S FOOD.

The evil effects of capitalism may be divided into two categories—those which at all times glaringly obtrude themselves before our notice, and those whose more insidious nature is revealed only occasionally in Blue Books, or in reports of Commissions or of judicial proceedings. In the latter category can be placed the practice of adulterating food and other articles.

It may safely be assumed that, despite periodical exposures, the alarming prevalence of adulteration is not generally realised. The average person is familiar, of course, with certain scandals arising from the employment of girls to make pips for "raspberry" jam, or from the additional fragrance imparted to tobacco by the admixture of an equine product which is eminently suitable for accelerating the growth of vegetable marrows. The extent of the danger may be more accurately gauged, however, by the perusal of the recently published report on the administration of the Sale of Food and Drugs Act during 1925. This report furnishes indisputable evidence that adulteration, in spite of all "safeguards" and heavy penalties following conviction, has not diminished, and is widespread in all cases where it is both practicable and profitable.

Let us examine the report referred to. We are told that during 1925 30 fresh appointments of Public Analysts have been approved. This item would suggest that the authorities are sceptical of their ability to eradicate the evil. (The Public Analyst, like the coercive forces, has become, it would seem, a permanent, indispensable, and growing feature of capitalism.) Following upon this information, is a summary of the results achieved by the analysis of the 118,930 samples submitted. Out of this mere "drop in the ocean" of commodities, no less than 7,714 samples, or 6.5 per cent., were found to have been tampered with, as compared with 5.9 per cent. for the previous year. Now when we consider (1) that samples required for analysis must be purchased in the ordinary way; (2) that the purveyor of contaminated articles is fully aware of the consequences of detection (and would, therefore, take precautions to "get the wire" before a visit from an inspector), and (3) that

only a fool would sell adulterated produce to a stranger except in error, we are justified in assuming that the percentage of adulteration over the whole range of commodities is at least as high as that revealed by the samples analysed. The percentage of adulteration in London and the 40 largest provincial towns was 5.5, and in the remainder of the country 7.7.

A few details from the report of the various substances examined may help better to indicate the extent of the practice.

In respect of milk, the number of samples found to be adulterated or below standard, was 5,163 out of 61,909 analysed or 8.3 per cent., the percentage for the previous year being 7.7—a gratifying increase! Dirt, preservatives, formaldehyde, colouring matter (chiefly annatto), deficiency of fat to the extent of 30, 40, and 50 per cent., and in one case 85 per cent., and added water in quantities varying from 4.5 to 30 per cent., were discovered amongst the unwanted contributions to baby's dietary. No wonder patent foods are sometimes preferred to milk as a means for rearing bonny (*not* bony) babies! Some workers occasionally taste butter—or at least, imagine they do! These favoured ones will doubtless be interested to know that samples of butter were found to contain water above the legal limit of 16 per cent., excessive preservative, and in some instances were almost wholly margarine. The huge army of margarine devourers may console themselves by these revelations, but they will find cold comfort in the fact that samples of "marge" were found to be improved by the addition of water in excess of 16 per cent., preservatives in abundance, mineral oil of the nature of paraffin, and butter fat above the legal maximum (10 per cent.).

After these disclosures some may evince a desire to "have jam on it." If so, they should seek to develop a taste for such substances as glucose syrup, salicylic acid, apple pulp, or dyes, and in time we have no doubt a positive craving could be acquired for pieces of glass, glaze, enamel, or "silicious particles"—all of which delectable tit-bits were discovered in abundance in samples of that delicacy which, to

the worker, typifies extravagance and opulence, namely, jam! Up to now we have cherished the illusion that a capitalist environment is the cause of the "iron entering into" so many of the workers, but the report throws some light upon a possible alternative reason for this phenomenon—anchovy paste. The analysis of one sample of this fastidious dainty revealed the presence of 14 per cent. of ash consisting almost entirely of iron oxide! Some anonymous wiseacre has coined the brilliant epigram, "There's cheese and cheese." Unfortunately the evidence advanced in support of this assertion has not been transmitted to us, but the report we are commenting upon enables us to accept this dictum, and further to classify cheese as (1) The wholesome and highly nutritious article of food we hear of in books on dietetics, and (2) The substance known to the workers as cheese. "Dutch Cheshire Cheese" made from skimmed milk, "Cream Cheshire Cheese" containing 32 per cent. instead of 70 per cent. of fat, "Bondon Cheese" (or wholemilk cheese), containing 73 per cent. of water and "practically devoid of fat," are quoted in the report as typical instances of adulteration. Really, is it not time for the workers to say "cheese it!" Even samples of dripping were found to be contaminated—by water, colouring matter, and excess of free fatty acids (to disguise rancidity); and a miniature chemical laboratory was unearthed in samples of bun flour, which contained "a complex mixture of rice flour, mineral matter, sodium phosphate, sodium bicarbonate, and reverted calcium phosphate"! Judging from the report, chocolate and sweets, too, are calculated to put one "on his metal," for analysis showed the presence of foreign starch and fats, French chalk, sulphur dioxide, quartz, zinc, copper, and sawdust! What a feast for an ostrich—or a goat! We find also that the sweetening properties of sugar may apparently be augmented by the inclusion of coal-tar dye, sawdust, and ground rice! I will conclude the illustrations from the report by citing two examples, each of which is proclaimed at various times to be the "national beverage." I allude to tea and beer. A sample of the former seems really to have been a blacksmith's outfit masquerading as tea, for it was discovered to contain iron filings, pieces of wire, and nails. Such an exhilarating tonic, such a veritable spa-water

for the workers, should surely help greatly in the building of an iron constitution, and a physique pre-eminently wiry and as hard as nails! The analysis of samples of beer revealed the presence of lead, boric acid, and excess of salt. Observe how the emetic qualities of the salt are scientifically counteracted by the lead! This unique mixture would no doubt lie very comfortably like an alp on the chest of the living! But the boric acid is an improvement! Ah! he was some poet who wrote "Beer 'twas that brought him to his bier."

I have stated above the facts as derived from capitalist sources, and leave the reader to draw what inferences he chooses as to the utility, or desirability of a system which has failed to eradicate a practice so dangerous to human well being. Whilst refraining from exaggerating the magnitude of the evil, the writer would point out that it is one among many evils endured by the workers which react one upon the other. Thus cheek by jowl with adulteration we find underfeeding, overcrowding, physical degeneration, ill-health, premature decay, and a host of other ills attendant upon poverty. The abolition of the cause of the one evil will abolish, therefore, the entire body of these evils. What, then, is the cause of the prevalence of adulteration? We see how capitalism has accentuated the dangers of the practice, and one Commission of Inquiry after another has failed to do more than to suggest the imposition of stringent penalties. This latter course does not grapple with the *cause*, and virtually attributes the practice to human imperfections or to the malevolence of individuals. But however malevolent a capitalist might be, he is possessed of sufficient intelligence to know that the pursuit of malevolence in adulterating his products bears hardly upon his pocket when he foots the bill for hospitals, disease, and the impaired efficiency of his own and other workers. A deeper cause must be sought for. The present "social" system is based upon the private ownership of the means of living. A necessary feature of such a system is the production for sale of articles made by workers, who are compelled by their propertyless condition to sell for wages their one valuable possession, their labour-power, to these owners of the means of living. As the workers produce far more than the value of their wages they are deprived of the wealth they produce in proportion to

the quantity of goods that are produced for sale. The resultant competition between these exploiters of the workers (that is, the capitalists) for the markets in which to dispose of their commodities, impels certain of them to seek an advantage over their rivals by adulterating some of their produce with shoddy imitations, increasing bulk and weight by the addition of rubbish, "deodorising" or "preserving," and other harmful shifts. Production for profit is, therefore, the root cause of adulteration.

It has been contended that even under a system of society where production is for use and not for profit, there will still be adulteration. For instance, will not "preservatives" be necessary at all times to prevent putrefaction or rancidity of "perishable" articles? Under a sane system production will be regulated by the ascertained needs of society—chaos will give place to scientific organisation of production, distribution, and apportionment. Society with its tremendous powers (many now latent) of production, transport, etc., could assure purity of food, and the necessity for adding poisonous ingredients to food will therefore not arise.

Regarding the plea that purchasers are often to blame for insisting upon having articles a certain colour, etc., that is not consistent to their nature, its speciousness is apparent when we consider the fact that purchasers are not informed of the deleterious nature of the substances that are used to obtain the desired colour, etc. When the whole people have the management of affairs in their own hands they will be rational enough and place purity before prettiness as a criterion of utility.

The Socialist remedy is the only one we prescribe.

Perchance in the course of centuries of capitalism (if such is conceivable) nature will adapt the digestive organs of workers to meet the perils that are inseparable from the rotten dietary compulsory to members of the working class. But Socialism is a more certain cure, and can be put into operation whenever the workers understand the necessity for it, and have organised themselves to take control of the political machinery, prior to effecting the change from capitalism to Socialism.

W. J.

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THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

Declaration of Principles.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

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WILL CAPITALISM COLLAPSE ?

Five years ago in these columns (Feb., 1922) the present writer criticised the doctrine of the "Collapse of Capitalism." During the same month a leading member of the Communist Party admitted that the plans of the Communists for world-revolution were bound up with the acceptance of this catastrophic view of social development. and agreed, in answer to a question, that ten years would prove or disprove the soundness of their view of events. Ten years would show the Communist movement within striking distance of final victory in this country, or it would show Communist policy to be false and the Communist Party would be deservedly dead and damned. Another Communist, Mr. Palme Dutt, likened capitalism to a house in imminent danger of collapse. It was beyond repair—reforms could no longer prop it up—and there was no time to organise and educate the majority of the workers to a recognition of the need for deliberate steps to take over power from the ruling class and set about reconstituting society from the bottom upwards. The "psychological moment" had arrived, capitalism was in ruins, we must get out or go under. (I wonder what has happened of recent years to our old Communist friend, "Psychological Moment"? Did she die of overwork and hope deferred, like "Soviets for Britain" and the "United Front"?)

Half of the allotted time has passed, and many Communists themselves have now come to see either that the theory of collapse was radically unsound, or that the nearness of that happy event was grossly exaggerated. We would be pleased to see the Communist Party approaching a more realistic view of the working-class position, but un-

fortunately, in driving out the false conception of social revolution, the lessons of experience have in many cases driven out also the desire for revolution itself, and large numbers of disappointed ex-Communists have followed Ellen Wilkinson, Philips Price and Walton Newbold into the ranks of the anti-revolutionary Labour Party, or have altogether lost their interest in politics. The Communist Party in this country, judged by results, and especially in view of the enormous sums of money spent on advertisement and propaganda, has not been a success, and its want of success can be ascribed to this erroneous theory more than to any other single factor. If that theory were correct, it would be sound to attach far greater importance to getting the attention and sympathy of politically backward workers, than to educating them. It would be wise to try to develop "mass organisation" of the unemployed and manœuvre Communists into official position in the Trade Unions and the Labour Party. But the theory was all wrong, and the abundant enthusiasm of Communist members has brought no good to their party or to Socialism. Where, now, are the unemployed organisations? What is there to show for the energy devoted to supporting Labour candidates and trying to get into the Labour Party? After fluctuating violently and falling as low as 3,000, the membership of the Communist Party has during 1926 leapt up again and is now, apparently, about the same as in 1920. Is this progress? It is certainly not the success they looked for. Communism in the eyes of the mass of workers has come to be associated not with the real and unassailable Marxian position, but with a press-distorted version of the policy of the C.P.G.B., and

the ability of the press to misrepresent is largely due to the foolish actions and erratic changes of policy on the part of Communists themselves.

What, then, is this theory which has, in our view, done so much to give a wrong direction to the efforts of many workers? In its most general form it is a belief that friction and the contradictions which result from the basic structure of capitalism will inevitably produce an economic crisis such that the system itself will cease to function. The War, by increasing productive powers and at the same time blocking so many of the normal channels of capitalist trade, aggravated the problems of the capitalist class to a degree which would make collapse certain and imminent. Declining trade, industrial depression, growing armies of workless, stupendous burdens of war debts and taxation, a more than ever infuriated struggle for markets and raw materials—these were the bombing party who were going to blow capitalism into the air.

Where is this conception at fault? In the first place, let us make it clear that it is not Marxian. A system of society is not a pack of cards, or a house, or a piece of mechanism; it is a complex organisation of human beings. The organisational machinery of capitalism, like actual machinery, has no power or purpose of its own; it is governed and, if necessary, changed, by the class who are in control of society. Capitalism might conceivably be rent asunder and destroyed in a long-drawn-out struggle for mastery between contending classes, but, barring the failure of the natural physical basis of human life, it cannot fall and cannot be revolutionised except by the actions of the men and women who compose it. That capitalism contains within itself the germ of its own destruction is not inconsistent with Marx's words, "Man makes his own history." The development of capitalism has brought with it a deepening of the cleavage between wage-earners and property-owners, and has relegated the latter more and more to the position of a passive parasitic class simultaneously with an undreamed-of growth in their individual wealth and their power over the lives of the workers. The interests of the workers more and more obviously conflict with those of the capitalistic owners of the means of wealth production. "From forms of development of the forces of pro-

duction these (property) relations turn into their fetters" (Marx, "Critique of Political Economy," Kerr, 1911, page 12). In this process lies the germ of the destruction of capitalism. The production and distribution of wealth on capitalist lines do not become impossible; the system does not cease to function, but it becomes visibly an anachronism and therefore detestable to the workers. A period of revolution begins, not because life has become physically impossible, but because growing numbers of workers have their eyes suddenly opened to the fact that problems which they hitherto accepted as part of man's unavoidable heritage have become capable of solution. Life need not have become worse than before—it may have become better—but it becomes intolerable from the moment of realising that only the interests and institutions of the ruling class prevent it from being better still. From that moment the workers forget the consolations of religion and the innumerable conventional barriers in the way of action, and concentrate their energies on attacking the privileges of the capitalist class. Mere suffering, whether through unemployment or a declining standard of living, will not automatically produce such a result. It will not do so if the material conditions are not ripe for solving the problem, or if the victims lack knowledge of the solution or lack confidence to act. Famine in India produces apathy, not revolution. Unemployment in England may do the same.

In other respects, too, those who held the theory of the collapse of capitalism were mistaken. They produced evidence, but their "facts" were one-sided, and their conclusions did not logically follow.

They selected the British Empire, and particularly Great Britain, as their example. The staple industries, they said—iron, coal, and cotton—were in a bad way. Competitors were stealing the pre-war markets of British producers, production in these lines was declining, and exports generally. Unemployment was great and growing, new producing and exporting countries were coming into the field, and pre-war competitors were rapidly recovering or surpassing their pre-war levels of production. On this evidence the outlook appeared to be gloomy and hopeless for the capitalist class; but was the picture a complete one? It would take too long to deal with each in-

dustry, but it should suffice to mention some general conditions which were, and still are, ignored and which upset the assumptions behind that argument. First of all, it must be remembered that technical advance is always accompanied by the scrapping of old and the quick growth of new processes and new industries, and the country which has, like Great Britain, concentrated largely on a few main industries is naturally most affected either by world disturbances of trade or by the exploitation of new processes. But, however difficult the transition might be, was there ever any warrant for the belief that British capitalists would prove less willing or less able to adapt themselves than others? And does the bankruptcy of an old industry accompanied by the prosperity of a new one spell ruin for the capitalist class as a whole? Cotton might be depressed, but artificial silk has been taking its place. Coal might be in difficulties (as it was all over the world) but oil and electricity have been going forward by leaps and bounds. The amount of capital sunk in all branches of the very prosperous British electrical industry is estimated at no less than £768,000,000, and Sir John Snell predicts that the number of units of electricity generated will be trebled within 15 years (*Daily Telegraph*, Jan. 3). The development of the chemical industry has been crowned last year by the formation of the £65,000,000 Mond Combine. What has misled some observers is the quite natural desire of the capitalists in declining industries to howl their woes from the rooftops, and the equally natural reticence of those in other industries who were making enormous profits.

Again, allowance should have been made for the familiar recurring depression which is a century old feature of the system. Such a depression affecting almost all the world in 1921, no more justified the prophecy of ruin and collapse for British capitalism than depression did in pre-war days. Since 1921 unemployment in this country has been almost halved, currency problems in most European countries have been from a capitalist standpoint satisfactorily solved and no one now supposes that the war debts present any special difficulty. To say that pre-war capitalism had its problems, too, and that a return to approximately pre-war conditions does not signify undisturbed stability, is true, but the essence of the case for the

collapse of capitalism is that the war marked a turning point and the beginning of a new and troubled era from which there could be no return to the piping days of peace as it was known before 1914. Incidentally it must not be forgotten that even then the prototypes of the communists of to-day went on generation after generation making similar rash forecasts of collapse.

Much use has been made of figures showing a decline in exports, but rarely do the figures justify the use which is made of them. Although Great Britain depends largely on exports in certain industries, by far the greater part of production in this country is for the home market. The volume of production as a whole can and during the past few years undoubtedly has been increasing, while exports have been decreasing. Profits have since 1922 continually grown in this country, but declared profits again give only a partial indication of the magnitude of the proportion of wealth retained by the employing class. For years it may be the deliberate policy of expanding industries to devote to new plant the surplus which would otherwise appear as dividends.

It is not suggested that the real position of the British capitalists is easily estimated. Our present purpose is merely to show that hasty answers based on a few declining industries are inadequate and certainly exaggerated, if not wholly wrong. It is by no means incompatible with the evidence presented that the nature of capitalist industry in this country is changing. The transition may be difficult and may disclose features which do not fit into current popular methods of measurement, but difficulties do not mean collapse, and it is always worth considering whether the standards of measurement may not themselves be inapplicable.

But even if British capitalism were doomed to lose its place in the front rank, does that signify a collapse of capitalism? If America ousts Britain is the system itself any weaker? If Europe and England become financial dependencies of the United States banks is it any less necessary for the workers to overthrow capitalism? Just as the decline of the cotton industry implies no necessary weakening of British capitalism, so the transfer of the supremacy from Europe to America may well be a cause of strength to the capitalist system; it is certainly not evidence of a collapse. Similarly

the difficulties of the British Empire occasioned by the revolt of dependent countries, like India and Egypt, etc., only shows how virile capitalism yet can be.

India and Egypt, China and Mexico, are going through the painful birth processes of capitalism. British capitalist interests may suffer, but capitalism is not being undermined. In passing it is as well to repeat that in our view the danger to British capitalism from these quarters has been generally misunderstood and largely over-estimated.

Let us face the facts. Capitalism is strong, and the capitalists are growing wealthier. They have forgotten their post-war panic and are confident of the stability of their system. The machinery of capitalist organisation, the banks, foreign trade, etc., may bring their problems, but it is absurd to suppose that the capitalists will in the long run allow unprogressive members of their own class to imperil the system by persisting in methods, such as unrestricted competition, which have become more dangerous than useful. The confidence of the capitalists in the stability of capitalism rests on the docility of the working class. Capitalism continues because the workers unthinkingly accept it. To devise means of prolonging this convenient condition of the workers' minds is the chief and potentially fatal problem of the capitalist class. Capitalism will not collapse. It will end when the workers organise to bring it to an end. To educate and organise the workers for that purpose is the only problem with which Socialists should concern themselves.

H.

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AN ANARCHIST DEFENCE OF PRIVATE PROPERTY.

The following letter has been received from an anarchist reader of the S.S. We append our reply.

There are two Socialisms, one based upon individual subordination and the absolute denial of *private property* (Marxian and Kropotkin Socialism), the other based upon individual sovereignty and the insistence upon *private property* (Proudhonian Socialism). Marx attacks liberty—Proudhon attacks privilege. Marx attacks capital—Proudhon attacks monopoly. Marx thought capital was one thing and labour product another. He would abolish wages by confiscating all capital to the State, that is the *conscription* of all wages and workers—*Militarism, Bureaucracy!* Marx said value could not be determined, yet he says that the worker produces four and receives one. How did he find that out? Marx ignored the money question; like Kropotkin, he was an absolute dud in finance. Marx thought profits, or that part of the product kept back by the employers, was the only means of exploitation worth mentioning, yet profit is simply the difference between what a man buys goods at and what he sells them at. I contend that competition in the supply of a currency divorced from its *metallic* or *specie* basis would abolish that difference! Why, to-day the four hundred millions interest on the National Debt will admit of eighty thousand to live at the rate of five thousand a year, who need not own any means of production or engage in any enterprise, and who can look with philosophic calm on all your strikes and riots as long as the State remains intact! Why, even Lord Rothermere, through his *Daily Mail*, has been clamouring for the Government to tax the Channel Islands because Mr. Houston and other millionaires were flying there to dodge Karl Marx, the *old Tory tax collector*. I shall insist that every trader shall, like the proprietors of theatres, state the amount of tax on each article, including beer, spirits, and tobacco. This will educate the workers and expose the cowardice, hypocrisy, and *criminality* of your Labour champions and all politicians and *invaders*. I will conclude with a few questions. (1) Are not the working classes deprived of their earnings by usury in its three forms—interest, rent, and profit? (2) Is not such

deprivation the principal cause of poverty? (3) Is not poverty the principal cause of *illegal* crime? (4) Is not usury dependent upon monopoly, and principally the land and money monopolies? (5) Could these monopolies exist without the State at their back or the sanction of the Government?

Ground rent exists because the State stands by to collect it and to protect land titles rooted in force and fraud, otherwise the land would be free to all and no individual could control more than he could use. Interest and house rent exist because the State grants to their bankers the sole right to monetise the capital and securities produced by the workers, and to issue credits thereon to finance war and to create parasites by endowing churches, colleges, and hospitals, inspectors innumerable, presidents, chairmen and staffs for boards of trade commissions of enquiry, censors for cinemas to see that you get plenty of military and religious dope; staffs for wireless and for ratifying district agreements, with the Labour Party supporting Army and Navy officers as Parliamentary candidates whose interest is, like the lawyers, to increase taxation, and thus ensuring the slavery of the workers by pawning the future products of the workers and their children to the State! So we have discovered our enemies—the financiers, the State bankers, the currency jugglers are the vipers sucking at the vitals of industry, and the State, the Government, the public trustees are their protectors and *co-operators*, which only free labour can detach and kill.

Give the workmen their economic independence by giving them free access to the means of life which come without labour, and they will produce and exchange their wealth. As for the usurers and their protectors, stripped of their power to steal, they will have to join the ranks of labour or starve. This is where I stand, and I invite any and all to meet me here and whip me if you can. I should close here, but I must tell you that the Labour Party is the last refuge for bankrupt aristocracies and broken down thrones; hence the riddle of their titled and military members!

T. H. MAHONY.

OUR REPLY.

This is the third letter we have printed from Anarchist individualists, and it betrays the same vagueness and misconception as

those from previous correspondents. There is no attempt made to deal with the economic development and tendencies of our time, and no effort is made to show how private property in the great means of production can exist without a rich owning class on the one side and a vast working and non-owning class on the other. The first accusation to be noted is that "Marx attacks Liberty"! Where does not occur. The only Liberty Marx attacks is the Liberty to rob! The sheer nonsense of our critic talking of "Kropotkin Socialism" is an example of the general confusion in his letter. Kropotkin opposed Socialism and stood for "absolute individual liberty"—whatever that might mean. Our critic is referred to the complete answer to Proudhon given by Marx in his work, "Poverty of Philosophy." Monopoly is a direct result of competition and is inevitable under capitalism. The statements made about Marx in the above letter clearly show that Mr. Mahony has never read Marx. Marx shows in "Capital" that the product of labour becomes capital because the product of the labourer is the property of the capitalist and only a portion in the shape of wages is returned to the worker.

Marx did not propose putting capital in the hands of the State, but that the producers should own the means of wealth production in common, and with the abolition of private or class ownership the State would die out.

In the same sentence our critic accuses Marx of advocating the abolition of wages, and then says Marx advocated the conscription of wages!

Marx advocated neither. The gem in the above letter is the statement that Marx says that Value could not be determined! Actually all Marx's economic writings—"Value, Price and Profit," "Wage Labour and Capital," "Capital," "The Critique of Political Economy," and others—all state that value is measured by the amount of labour socially necessary to produce an article.

The joke of claiming that Marx ignored the money question is evident to the merest tyro in Marxian study, for, apart from the "Poverty of Philosophy," the great three volumes of "Capital" and the "Critique" deal specifically and completely with the money question. Marx alone was able to demonstrate the secret of money and showed

the actual part played by money in capitalist economy.

If there is any other source of exploitation but that occurring in withholding the product of labour from the producers, it would be interesting to have it stated.

The crude notion that a metal or specie currency is the cause of exploitation is completely answered by the facts of modern life wherever there is a paper currency. No tinkering with currency or allowing any person to issue it would touch the simple cause of slavery and poverty—the ownership of wealth by a section of the population, and the dependence of the rest upon that section for permission to work and live. If the National Debt was abolished, the workers would be no better off, because they do not pay for the debt, but interest and principal is paid for by the employing class out of the surplus values taken by them in production.

The fact of the *Daily Mail* clamouring for the taxation of millionaires who try to evade taxation by moving to the Channel Islands shows the truth of our position. The capitalists, having to bear the general expenses of government (out of the proceeds of exploiting the workers), are anxious to make all capitalists contribute.

Taxation does not concern the workers. If there were no indirect taxes at all, the causes of working-class poverty would still remain. The questions asked by our correspondent are easily answered.

(1) Rent, interest and profit are three parts into which the surplus taken by the industrial capitalist is divided. These three forms result from private ownership and can only be abolished when the producers own the means of production.

(2) The cause of poverty is stated in answer to Question 1. Rent, interest and profit are not the fundamental causes, but these three forms of stolen wealth are effects of capitalist ownership of the means of production.

(3) Modern crime is due to the material conditions resulting from class ownership.

(4) Interest is a result of private ownership and is legalised by all capitalist Governments as a useful means of carrying on trade and commerce for them.

(5) The State is not at the back of the capitalists. The State is the Central Committee of the capitalist class and carries on

the executive affairs on their own behalf. All private property society needs a State to rule the subject class and to conduct and regulate the affairs of government in the interest of the ruling class.

Economic independence for the worker depends upon their free access to the land, factories, workshops, machinery, etc., and all other means of production.

But as the modern methods of producing involve large-scale production and associated labour, the means of wealth cannot be owned individually by each worker. They are too vast and beyond the means of any producer. As they must be co-operatively worked, so they must be commonly owned. There is no other solution. Individual ownership by the few rich non-producers, with the resulting poverty of the many—or common ownership by the producers themselves for their own comfort and enjoyment. That is the position our critic has to face.

The evading of this important fact of economic evolution by our Anarchist critics, and the calm assumption that we are living back in the days when means of production were small enough to be owned individually by the producers—these two points make all attempts at much discussion with them futile.

A. KOHN.

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THE PACIFISTS AND SOCIALISM.

The Labour Party claims (sometimes) to represent the interests of the workers. An illustration of its method of doing this occurred in the House of Commons recently.

On March 17th Mr. Ponsonby (one of the Liberal "converts") moved that the Air Force be reduced by 32,000 men. This is, of course, quite consistent with the general attitude of the author of the "Peace Letter" on the question of Disarmament. Such a motion, however, is about as practical as asking the master-class to commit suicide outright.

It would, of course, be of financial advantage to considerable sections of the property owning class if their system could be maintained without expensive machines of destruction. If only other capitalists would not butt into the world-markets struggling for their place in the sun—if only the workers would peacefully accept wage reductions whenever necessary and never, never, never ask for a rise in their scale of fodder supplies—what a beautiful world it would be. There would be no need for the machinery of government to protect property and none would be more ready to apply the principle of disarmament than the Conservative Party.

The representatives of capitalist interests, however, have learned by grim experience that a system of exploitation such as the present can only be preserved by force and in this conclusion they find themselves at one with quite a considerable section of the Labour Party. Only twenty-four members of that Party supported Mr. Ponsonby's motion. The official Labour Party could not do so without jeopardising their whole position.

Representing the opinions of millions of workers, who accept the capitalist system as the necessary form of society, the Labour Party as a whole can do nothing but maintain that system through the machinery of government. They cannot entertain any suggestion of weakening the forces which are the essential element in that machinery. The disarmament of the capitalist class can only be accomplished by a political party representing a working class awake to its position as the slave-class in society and determined to end that situation.

Ponsonby, Lansbury and the rest of the Pacifist crowd in the Labour Party know that

the confusion in their ranks makes their position safe. On this point they will always be treated as harmless cranks by their stodgy, respectable colleagues. Variety is the spice of life, and it would most certainly not do for a party trying to run "the nation" to think in unison.

The *New Leader* of March 18th (p. 4) informs us that there are no less than five distinct groups of opinion within the Labour Party on this question.

First, there are the out-and-out Pacifists; secondly, those who profess to believe in the class-war and who only condemn arms in the hands of the capitalist government; thirdly, the S.D.F. "citizen army" group; fourthly, the bulk of the Party which wants to wait till all the thieves have agreed to stop squabbling over the booty; finally, "the die-hards, who really believe in armies and navies."

Whatever they may "believe" or not believe, these groups all joined hands in supporting the MacDonald Government, which did the dirty work of the Capitalist Class in Iraq and elsewhere.

One of Ponsonby's supporters, a Mr. Shepherd, advertised himself as a Quaker, who had been misled by propaganda into actually fighting during the recent carnage. This illustrates once more the worthlessness of religious and so-called ethical scruples to the workers. Only Socialist knowledge can prevent them yielding themselves up a willing sacrifice on the altar of capitalist necessity. Millions of Christians slaughtered one another, firmly convinced that God approved of their conduct.

To the workers who understand their position in society it is a matter of indifference which section of the international master class is the best equipped with engines of war. Whichever side wins or loses, the workers of both sides lose their lives or gain nothing if they survive.

The Socialist Party advocates the organisation of the working class for the capture of the political machinery in order that a new social order may be established in which the means of life will be owned in common by all and in which therefore there will be no need for the forcible protection of property and the slaughter of millions of producers in order to decide which bunch of parasites shall control the trade routes and markets of the world.

E. B.

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

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The Socialist Standard,

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1927

**WHAT WE MEAN
BY REVOLUTION.**

When we say that Socialism means revolution and that we are revolutionaries, experience leads us to expect that we shall be misunderstood unless we take care to make our meaning plain. On the one side it will be assumed that we are advocating violence and anti-democratic methods, and on the other side, as we are frequently told by those who do advocate these things, our refusal to do the same stamps us as non-revolutionary. What then do we mean by revolution?

Our aim is to abolish working-class poverty and subjection to the owners of the means of living. We see that the workers are poor as a class because as a class they do not own the machinery of wealth production and distribution. Those who live by owning are living at our expense, and are effectively hindering the most economical use and development of the productive forces. Nothing will serve to secure the desired end, except the abolition of the private ownership of these instruments. But private property is the corner-stone of the existing laws and the very foundation of capitalist society. So that, in order to abolish private ownership, we, the workers, must obtain control of society. Revolution consists in using the power we shall then possess, for the purpose of destroying the

present property rights and refashioning society on the basis of common ownership. As our aim, Socialism, can be accomplished only by this revolutionary change, we are revolutionaries and our method is revolution.

It will be observed that no mention has been made of the use of violence. We need to control society but we believe that this can be done through the existing political machinery. We believe that the working class can, when they so desire, use constitutional methods to make themselves masters of the situation, and can use their power for the purpose of instituting socialism just as easily as they use it at present for the purpose of returning the Conservative or the Labour Party, whose only difference is an inability to agree as to the best method of administering capitalism. The workers are the overwhelming majority of the electors and can, when they wish, use their votes for Socialism.

We do not intend to use violent methods because under existing conditions in this country they would not help us to obtain socialism. The presence or absence of rioting and bloodshed is merely incidental. A revolutionary end, that is, the displacement of a ruling class, may take place in an orderly fashion, but it is none the less revolutionary for that. The Socialist differs from the supporter of the Labour Party in this respect that the latter seeks to gain control of the political machinery for non-revolutionary purposes, while we are aiming at gaining control in an equally constitutional way, but for a fundamentally different object.

And just as revolution may be free from any show of violence, so violence may and frequently does occur where there is no revolutionary object being sought and resisted.

The pre-war suffrage agitation was marked by the completest disregard for laws and property rights, but its aim was in no sense revolutionary. Strikes and lock-outs are often accompanied by conflicts with the police and even with the armed forces, without there ever being at issue more than some trifling question of wages or hours which could be settled by the employers entirely giving way, without in the least endangering their position as a privileged class.

We avoid these things deliberately, not only because they are chiefly a source of danger to those who practice them, but also because they would mislead the workers and

**A SOLDIER'S THOUGHTS ON
THE WAR.**

The Fourth Age. By William Repton. (Price 1s. Pioneer Press, 61, Farringdon Street, E.C.4.)

In nine short sketches Mr. Repton (a regular contributor to the *Freethinker*) records some of his impressions of the war and passes bitter judgment on the civilisation which produced it, the pressmen who gloried in it, and the parsons who blessed it.

His simple, direct stories of the hopes and fears, compensations and discomforts of life in the trenches have the force of sincerity and carry conviction. It would be difficult to match in so small a compass the power of these vivid and poignant pictures of the mind of the disillusioned soldier. With neither religion nor patriotism to give a false glamour to reality, seeing through the screen of lies, and realising that the mad destruction had no redeeming purpose whatever, and yet to be compelled to go on risking life and health, this must have been the terrible position of many besides Mr. Repton.

These sketches are true, and yet their truth appears unfamiliar even so long after the passing of the censorship and the rest of the official machinery for suppressing and distorting the truth. It is a warning of the power possessed by those who rule to mould the opinions of the ruled, even of those among the latter who know full well that truth is simply irrelevant to profit-seeking newspaper proprietors and war-making Governments. This power made it possible not only to segregate the soldier who knew war as it was from the war-mad civilian with his childishly romantic conceptions, but it also raised an effective barrier between the soldier on the one hand and on the other the small band of Socialists who alone had a message of hope and sanity to offer him. We knew there must be many who thought like Mr. Repton, but between them and us was the frenzy of the civilian and the poison gas of the press.

Reading these pages, we can recall with pride that from the first day of the War to the last this journal never printed one single line of support for the War and never ceased to proclaim the need for complete and unconditional peace between the world's workers.

Judged by size, "The Fourth Age" is

obscure our larger aim. If we preached violence we should first have to devote much time to explaining that violence cannot gain power for a minority and a majority can gain power without it. Secondly, we would be allowing our opponents the opportunity of side-tracking the main issue. If we advocated unconstitutional methods our energies would be taken up in debating the issue of constitutionalism, whereas we want to preach Socialism.

The Socialist Movement to-day is weak for one reason only, that is because of the small number of Socialists. There is no lack of believers in violence and opponents of it and no lack of friends and enemies of constitutionalism. If we added unnecessary confusion to the Socialist case by delving into these other less-important controversial questions, we might add to the numbers of muddled hangers-on to the fringes of the Socialist Movement, but that is not our aim. How true this is can be seen from the recent experiences of the Communist Party. Forgetting that their prime object should have been the furtherance of Communist propaganda, their energies have been absorbed in fruitless endeavours to combat the misrepresentation to which they were subjected immediately they associated themselves with illegal and anti-constitutional activities. Had they stuck to the essentials of their case they could have argued it on its merits. As it is their case has almost disappeared under a mass of almost irrelevant charge and counter-charge relating to side issues.

Everyone has heard of the Communist Party through the capitalist press, but hardly anyone now knows what that party really stands for. It is opposed by people who learn what Communism is from the *Daily Mail*, and it is supported by others who are not much better informed on the points that really matter.

We then are revolutionaries because Socialism involves a revolutionary transformation. Violence cannot assist us, and we, therefore reject violence.

The great need of the moment is more Socialists. Socialists can be won only by the steady propagation of Socialist knowledge. This is dull, plodding work, but it is the only way. In carrying on that work in spite of all temptation to aim at cheap and fleeting popularity, we are performing a task which is an indispensable prelude to revolutionary action.

dear, but those who appreciate the frank expression of independent and thoughtful views will not consider their shilling wasted. H.

THE UTOPIAN OUTLOOK.

It is over a hundred years since Robert Owen gave to the world at large his "New View of Society," now republished by Messrs. J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., in Everyman's Library (price 2s., cloth). Modern industry based upon machinery was still in its infancy, though it was developing rapidly and revolutionising the mode of life of millions of workers.

The French Revolution with its flowery promises had resulted in bitter disillusion for the workers and given rise to the Napoleonic wars. An unprecedented trade boom gave way to an equally remarkable slump. In the place of overwork stepped unemployment, and destitution appeared widespread just at the moment when the production of wealth had reached its zenith. The rumblings of discontent everywhere were shaking the confidence of members of the ruling class in the permanence of the social structure.

As a member of that class Owen came forward with his plan. For something like thirty years he had been gaining experience as manager and ultimately owner of various industrial undertakings, and he had learnt to appreciate the important part played by the conditions of employment in moulding the character and habits of the workers, and he had the intelligence to apply his knowledge with practical advantage to himself.

He discovered that his employees produced more when their hours of labour were shortened and the sanitary and educational conditions of their existence were improved, and he jumped to the conclusion that what was possible in his case was possible in all cases; and that all that was required in order to bring heaven to earth was for him to make known his success.

To his fellow-manufacturers he addressed an appeal to follow his example and urge the Legislature to limit hours of labour for adults as well as children, and to prohibit the employment of the latter under a certain age. To various prominent and influential members of the aristocracy he proposed that the Government should establish villages of industry run on similar lines to his own in order to absorb the unemployed and relieve

the pressure on the Poor Rate. To the workers he preached patience and goodwill towards their exploiters in the hope that the latter would mend their ways.

"Rich and poor, governors and governed, have really but one interest" (p. 154).

For Owen, the struggle between the workers and their exploiters was an evil to be got rid of by preaching, while the effort on the part of the former to obtain political power was regarded as vain and futile by this forerunner of reformers. Professing to regard all men as the creatures of their circumstances, he yet failed to appreciate his own short-sightedness, itself the product of his class outlook.

Nevertheless, his work possessed at the time considerable critical value. He exposed the anarchy and waste of competition, the mainspring of capitalism. He showed the futility of expecting to eliminate crime while leaving the causes thereof untouched. He flattened out the pretensions of myriad religious sects to be the harbingers of brotherly love. In a word he exploded the comfortable notions of social progress which the Manchester School of bourgeois thought endeavoured to spread.

Industrial progress and the political development accompanying it thrust Owen's views into the background so far as the advanced workers were concerned. The legalisation of the Trades Unions, the Ten Hours Act and the winning of the franchise, all these were the result of struggle and not of mere persuasion.

They cleared the field for independent action by the workers, and on that basis Marx developed his theory of the class struggle as the means of ushering in the new society.

The followers of Owen degenerated either into sectarian cranks pursuing semi-monkish experiments in the form of isolated colonies, or mere humbugs trying to beat the tradesmen at their own game of profit-making by means of "divi-" stores. While Marx applied the materialist method to enable the workers to discover the means of their own emancipation, the Holyokes and others tried to erect Secularism to the dignity of a new religion.

Owen's ideas have been assimilated in part by many of the members of the capitalist class. The Leverhulmes, the Cadbury's, and the Ford's have all applied his teachings in so far as they paid to do so, and have posed as men of originality. All

the politicians who uphold capitalism pay lip-service to his notion of goodwill and harmony between the classes. The "social problem" is far from solution however as ever it was. It will remain so until the workers, driven to learn by experience, accept the discoveries of Marx as their guide and forsake the leadership of parasitic, self-appointed "friends."

In opposition to the capture of political power and the common ownership of the means of life, all that these friends can offer—from the Labour "Left" to the Tory "Right"—is Utopia. E. B.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. LILE (Swansea).—

T. C. Morris the South Wales organiser of the Labour Party, has never contributed to "The Socialist Standard." Non-members are not permitted to write for our columns except as correspondents.

DE MOC (Essex).—

Name and address must accompany all correspondence intended for publication or reply.

WEST HAM.

A series of 5 outdoor meetings will be held at or near Water Lane, Stratford, on May 2nd to 6th inclusive. Commence 8 p.m.

THE 23rd ANNUAL PARTY CONFERENCE

will be held on

Friday & Sat., Apr. 15th. & 16th.

FAIRFAX HALL,

STANHOPE GARDENS, HARRINGAY, N.

Commence at 10 a.m.

Open to All.

THE ANNUAL PARTY RE-UNION will take place in the above hall on Good Friday, April 15th, at 7.30 p.m. Doors open 7 p.m. Tickets from any Branch Secretary.

A MEETING

will be held at

BATTERSEA TOWN HALL,

(Lower Hall)

On SUNDAY, APRIL 17th, at 7.30 p.m.

Speaker - G. BELLINGHAM.

Questions and Discussion. Admission free.

A LOOK ROUND.

WHO PAYS FOR ROYAL TRIPS?

Those who must have the support of the majority of the workers in their present mental state must also of necessity appeal and act in a manner which will not arouse hostility, even although not in the workers' interest. Whether such appeals are the outcome of sincerity or duplicity does not alter this fact. In the debate on the expenditure for the Duke and Duchess of York's Australian trip we have a useful illustration, the Labour members being, of course, well to the front.

Mr. Scurr "did not think that this is a time when this visit ought to have taken place, considering the distress existing in the country." Mr. Buchanan "thought it unjustifiable to expend this money on a useless visit." Dr. D. Shiels seemed quite charmed because those in Australia "who belong to the same movement as we do are looking forward to the visit," as they regard the Royal Family as "the symbol of the unity of the Empire." How truly democratic these Labourites are! Perhaps the "best" was what Mr. Kirkwood got off his chest:—

Here we have got to pay for the sending out of their Royal Highnesses on this excursion, which is simply a joy ride. . . . I know the responsibilities that my own class are carrying at the present moment and they are very heavy. . . . The Duke of York and his wife are being voted this £7,000, and who has to pay for it? The working class has to pay for it—my class, my fellow tradesmen; the engineers, with their £2 15s. a week; the miners have to pay for it. I wish the working class were here just now. I wish they had their eyes on me protesting here on their behalf. (Hansard, Feb. 17th, 1927.)

This is just clap-trap. The inference is that if capitalist expenditure were curtailed, the money so expended would flow straight into the workers' pockets. Actually, the enormous wealth you produce is the property of your masters, and that the portion returned to you (wages) never does much more than pay for the food, clothing, shelter and incidentals necessary to sustain your class as efficient units of wealth-producing energy. When you have purchased these necessities, you could not give any away and maintain the efficiency your masters require. You are too closely rationed for that. How, then, can you pay for anything beyond these rations and incidentals? What you actually receive as wages is not the

mere money, but what it buys. 60s. with high prices is no more to you than 30s. with low prices, if it only maintains the same standard of life. It is the money payment that permits the illusion so dear to the workers that they "pay for everything." Those who retain all you PRODUCE, minus the fraction they return to you in the form of wages, must meet the expenditure incurred in maintaining *their* Royalty, *their* navies, armies, paupers, criminals, lunatics, and so on. Though you pile wealth mountain high, the wages system never gives you more than subsistence. These capitalist agents endeavour by any means to hide this fact, because they recognise that for you to have a clear understanding of the cause of your poverty would fit you for the working out of your own emancipation. In that case you would send them about their business, for the capitalist henchmen that they are. At present their only chance of keeping place and pelf is by preventing you from gaining knowledge of your class interests.

* * *

IS PRODUCTION TOO SMALL?

But the total production of the world has never been sufficient to keep the population of the world in decency, that is to provide that all shall live up to the standard recognised at any given time as desirable. (Sir Ernest Benn, Times, Nov. 17th, 1926.)

The above is one of those meaningless ambiguities beloved by the so-called business men of to-day. Any standard work dealing with industrial history or a summary of the applied science and inventions of the nineteenth century would show that our potential powers of production were multiplied in that period far beyond anything the human family were ever likely fully to utilise. Allowing for the limitations imposed because capitalism produces only for sale, Dr. Russell Wallace, in "The Wonderful Century," calculated that our producing capacity at the end of the century had grown ten times faster than the population. Ample evidence is available to show that as far as production is concerned the poverty question was no longer a problem with the coming of modern manufacture and mass output. We learn from a magazine to which Sir Ernest Benn has himself contributed many times:—

Of all the agricultural countries of the world Canada stands first in ratio of increase of production in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Wheat production at the end of this quarter century was over 600 per cent. greater in yield than in 1900, oats 200 per cent., barley 500 per

cent., rye 600 per cent. . . . It is, in the light of these facts, and prospects, not an exaggeration to say that we are only beginning to grow wheat in Canada. (Business Organisation, March.)

What applies to agriculture applies equally to manufacture. The fact that in practically every leading industry (agriculture included) production has had to be curtailed, makes Sir Ernest Benn's statement look childish. The following is only a sample of what takes place with tea, rubber, cotton, wool, etc. :—

The steel cartel has decided to reduce production by 1,500,000 tons for the first three months of 1927. (Daily Chronicle, Dec. 11th, 1926.)

We do not expect our masters to point out the cause of our poverty; their privileges as landlords, shareholders, and dummy directors are based upon our exploitation as producers. Obviously, then, it must be the workers' task to convert those material means of providing comfort and security for others into the common property of all. Then, not only could the race be kept in "decency," but a life of grandeur could be made available for all.

* * *

THE SOURCE OF THE "SOCIAL EVIL."

It is in the very nature of the reformer to take for granted the continuance and the inevitability of the present system of society. After years and years of tinkering with social evils separately, and seeking to sum up the net result of their efforts, they are often in their more honest moments driven to confess utter failure and despair.

A committee of experts recently made extensive enquiries on an international scale upon the White Slave Traffic, and a lengthy report has been made to the League of Nations. Among some of the causes enumerated are:—

Bogus offers of employment in a foreign country are not infrequently used as a means of leading girls to become prostitutes. . . . The contracts also are often drawn up in terms so harsh that the girl who signs one has little or no security. Governments would be well advised to protect their nationals against victimisation of this character. (Times, Mar. 12th, 1927.)

It is almost needless to point out that those who must seek employment, bogus or otherwise, here or elsewhere, are girls of the working class. They have no more security here in "free" England than have their male counterparts in wage slavery. Here, too, the terms of living for thousands upon thousands of girls are so harsh that

whole armies are driven to live in the same way as that which is deplored in these Continental cities, considered such sinks of iniquity. A country that can boast 80,000 fresh cases of venereal disease yearly (pamphlet issued by the Council for Combating Venereal Disease) has little right to claim Britain to be the "one bright spot." Our ruling class, however, are essentially hypocritical, a relic of the Puritanism with which they helped to fight their way to power. The sentiments of this report are akin to the canting ethics of the cotton lords who shed crocodile tears for American slaves whilst fighting legislation aimed at preventing them from working their own child operatives to death. After a column of proposals the Committee practically admits its whole work to be a waste of effort, for we are told:—

The measures to which we have referred above are not likely to be successful while the incentive of money-making remains. Profit is at the bottom of the business. (Ibid.)

While profit is here held responsible for one evil, we claim that it is production for profit in the wide sense—the capitalist system—that engenders other evils. In our pamphlet, "Socialism," we show how it begets unemployment, intensified exploitation, and the misery and general poverty from which our class suffer. We have no time to wring our hands and bemoan the foulness of a particular social evil, but carry on our work of spreading the knowledge that Socialism is the remedy for all of the economic problems of the working class.

* * *

IS SOCIALISM GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP?

Sir Herbert Samuel is a Liberal who makes a few assertions, dubs them Socialism, shows their absurdity, and then congratulates himself that "it won't stand criticism." In the "Forward View" (quoted *Westminster Gazette*, 14/3/27) he writes:—

But the Labour Party committed two great errors. First, it definitely bound up its fortunes with the theory of Socialism. And Socialism has not been able to stand criticism. . . . the idea that here was a panacea which would cure poverty and unemployment, did not pass the calm examination of practical, impartial minds.

The Liberal is, of course, practical; his remedy, like that of the Labour Party, is to perpetuate the system that produces the evils

that they are always going to remove. With years of office and a huge majority, they still have to leave poverty and unemployment to the Young Liberals. The others have grown old in the cause of such stirring reforms as Labour Exchanges, Insurance, and Home Rule. And what, pray, is this panacea that impartial minds can't pass? Is it Socialism, or only what Samuel, through ignorance or imposture, calls Socialism? It is, he falsely says:—

. . . . Transferring the greater part of production, distribution and exchange from private enterprise to some form of public ownership and management. (Ibid.)

This he calls Socialism, but he is only repeating the confusion spread by the Labour Party and their leaders, like Mr. Hartshorn, who says that:—

The Post Office was really the one big Socialist organisation that had ever been built up in this country. If they could introduce the same principle and the same spirit into the other great industries they would be able to build up a great international brotherhood. (Vernon Hartshorn, Labour P.M.G., Observer, May 5th, 1924.)

State activities such as the Post Office are run like other capitalist concerns: their profits either go to relieve taxation, or Government bondholders take them, instead of receiving dividends as shareholders in a private company. The workers remain under the State concern as before—wage-slaves—even if their condition is not worsened owing to co-ordination, speeding-up, and consequent displacement of large numbers.

So far from being a charge on the community the Post Office has in the thirteen years 1912-13 to 1924-25 made a profit of 44 millions, all of which has gone in relief of taxation. Since 1914 there has been a decrease of more than 24,000 in staff, while much work has been added to the Post Office. This has resulted in speeding up and overwork. (Daily Herald, Dec. 14th, 1925.)

Apparently what the Labour Party look forward to is an international brotherhood of overwork and speeding-up. In Australia they have had Labour and State activities for years, yet we get the following admission from those who support the same thing at home here:—

Australia has had more experience of Labour Government than any country in the world. Some people may expect it to follow from this that Australia is the most Socialistic country in the world; but, alas! for democratic illusions. . . . After years of office it has nothing to show except pettifogging reforms, and it has actually condoned and encouraged the dominance of Finance capital in its area of control. Is there

any guarantee that in Britain politicians of the same school of thought will do otherwise. (Labour Magazine, Nov., 1926.)

No, they will not do otherwise, even were they the most straightforward men who ever took office. Not until the number of workers wanting Socialism is greater than those who are opposed or apathetic, can it be at hand. Socialism is common ownership. Public ownership is State capitalism. Emancipation cannot take place without the former, which involves the abolition of capitalism, and not a mere change in its form.

MAC.

PROGRESS AND PAUPERISM.

It is now over nine years since the Great War ended, and, in spite of the feeling aroused in the minds of many that capitalism was staggering to its doom, the machinery of production, or perhaps it would be better to say the organisation of capitalism, appears to have practically recovered from the many dangers that threatened it during the perilous period of changing over from war to peace conditions.

How marvellous the recuperative powers of capitalism must appear to those who are carried away by the seductive theory that we have only to sit tight and await the working out of the "blind forces of production," which are supposed to be driving the system to an undesired grave, without the assistance or intervention of the human element! The advocates of this view lug poor old Marx in by the scruff of the neck to support their erroneous ideas, on the plea that the Materialist Conception of History is the basis of the theory. The two men who worked out the Materialist Conception of History—Marx and Engels—were tireless in pointing out that in the process of human history there were *two* fundamental factors—man and his environment—and that it was human beings who struggled, and not environments. It is the action of shackling environment upon man that gives the punch, forcing man to act; the pressure of slavery, for instance, that urges the slave to free himself.

However, this is not quite what I intended to write about when I sat down. Sidney and Beatrice Webb have just published a volume on "English Poor Law History," and Clifford Sharp, reviewing it in the *Daily News* (11/3/27), makes some observations

that are interesting and, also startling to those who are not acquainted with the earlier history of this country.

It is interesting to note, for instance, that destitution, in the sense that we moderns so bitterly know it, was practically unknown in the Middle Ages, that not until the beginning of the commerce that has made some people so wealthy, was it necessary to codify by statute the various methods of helping those who were poor. Perhaps the quotation itself would be more informing than a few remarks upon it—so here it is:—

The chief fact that is likely to strike the unlearned reader of this story is that once upon a time there was no Poor Law at all in England—or anywhere else for that matter. The poor were "God's poor," and their needs were dealt with by the Church and by personal alms. So it was in this island from the Middle Ages down to the time of the Tudors. There was, of course, then practically no such thing as "destitution" in the modern sense, for the poor were mainly serfs or villeins, and had feudal lords who employed them and provided for their ordinary needs (!); and it was only sick folk and unattached travellers or vagrants, who were ever actually destitute.

Of course, farther back still, before the feudal lords so kindly employed the serfs and villeins, there was a time when the people employed themselves and, with the limited means at their disposal, saw to it that no one was destitute except when accident or famine or something similar occurred, in which event all went hungry together.

But is it not remarkable that learned professors and politicians should boast loudly of the enormous strides made during the last few hundred years in productive methods, when there has grown up in our midst a poverty problem of an appalling extent. When one sits back and thinks, the position appears in a comical light—there was little destitution in England until England became wealthy and prosperous! Then one reviews one's own life, with the struggles to keep the wolf from the door, and begins to wonder who or what is the "England" that has become wealthy. A little further thinking and wondering, and at last the realisation dawns upon the wonderer that it is only the few who "own property" that have become wealthy. The mass who produce the wealth are poorer than they were, in the sense that they have to struggle harder for what they get, and that the actual amount of destitution is proportionately greater.

Since its beginning in the time of Elizabeth, the Poor Law has answered its purpose: it has kept the hungry multitude from doing anything that would seriously endanger the system that provides wealth and comfort for the few out of the blood and tears of the many. And as long as the capitalists are far-seeing enough not to be too niggardly with their "almsgiving" schemes, the system might stagger on for an indefinite period.

This brings me back to the idea underlying the remarks I made at the beginning. In spite of all that the employers do, and may do, to throw dust in the eyes of the workers, the shoe pinches, and sooner or later the workers, being intelligent human beings, will have a look at the shoe to see what the real trouble is. Slowly but surely the idea is taking root that the cause of working-class misery lies in the nature of the modern system of wealth production, and sooner or later, owing to the fact that they have brains which draw upon their experience for thoughts and ideas, the workers will grasp the fundamental fact that they must exert themselves to transform wealth production from a basis of private ownership to a basis of common ownership in the means of producing wealth. The slumbering Chinaman is stirring: it is time for the West to awake!

GILMAC.

THREE PAMPHLETS.

Published by the Labour Research Department, 162, Buckingham Palace Road.

"RIVALS OF THE CO-OPERATIVES" (price 1d.) contains figures of the large profits made by the Maypole Dairy Co., Ltd., and various other big grocery concerns. Apart from these figures, the leaflet is grossly misleading. It assumes (without a shadow of proof) that working-class poverty is due to high prices, with the implication that low prices and working-class prosperity go hand in hand. Secondly, it admits that the Co-operative Societies have made profits of £220 million between 1913 and 1925, but does not attempt to explain in what respect Co-operative profits—drawn from the exploitation of Co-operative employees—differ from Maypole's or Peark's profits drawn from a similar source.

The Co-operative movement is part and parcel of the capitalist economic system, and as such is opposed by Socialists and should be exposed, not defended, by the L.R.D.

"CO-PARTNERSHIP AND PROFIT-SHARING" (price 1d.) is a handy little summary of the progress of profit-sharing and co-partnership devices intended to obscure the class struggle. It presents a table showing how little of the income of certain well-known firms actually reaches the workers under the guise of a "share in profits."

"THE REFORM (!) OF THE POOR LAW" (price 1d.), by John Scurr, is a denunciation of Conservative proposals to hand over the functions of Boards of Guardians to County Councils and County Boroughs, although he has to admit that "Labour policy has been directed in the same pathway" (page 12). The whole discussion reveals the barrenness of Labour Party reforms and the unsoundness of their theories. Does it really matter the least little bit to the working class whether property owners pay certain sums locally as rates or nationally as taxes? And is it not time to recognise that it is not the *form* of administrative machinery which counts, but the class interests of those who control it? While the capitalist class are in political control, no amount of words or parish council debating ability shown by Mr. Scurr and his party will prevent the capitalist class from using their administrative machinery to carry out their policies as they think fit. Mr. Scurr ends with the very revolutionary slogan, "Let our cry be, No further starvation of the poorest of the poor." It is a pity he does not explain what degree of starvation is permissible, and why the rest of the poor are to be thrown to the lions. Will it ever dawn on these professed Socialists that Socialism really is the only remedy? H.

NEW PAMPHLET.

We are proposing to publish a new pamphlet, but we cannot do so until we have the money. If we print 20,000 copies the cost will be in the neighbourhood of £100. We ask, therefore, for donations. As soon as we get sufficient to justify giving the order to our printer we shall be pleased to proceed. Let us have this pamphlet for the beginning of the 1927 propaganda season.

S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

LONDON DISTRICT.

Sundays: Finsbury Park, 3 p.m.
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.
Victoria Park, 4 p.m.
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11 a.m.
Paddington, Prince of Wales, 11.30 a.m.
Mondays: Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.

BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Rd. Discussion second Thurs. in month.
- BECONTREE.**—Branch meets Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at Ashton Hall, High Road, Chadwell Heath, Essex. Sec., S. Cash, 32, Greenway. Public invited.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec. E. Jesper, 36, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st & 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.
- CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Sec., at above address.
- EAST LONDON.**—Sec., A. Jacobs, 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.
- EDINBURGH.**—Sec., D. L. Lamond, 15, Barclay Place, Edinburgh.
- GLASGOW.**—Sec., J. Higgins, 816, Rutherglen-rd., Oatlands, Glasgow.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Saturdays, 7 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare Street, Hackney. Discussions after Branch Business. Sec. at above address.
- HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock St., Hanley, Staffs.
- HULL.**—Branch meetings, Sunday, at 3 p.m., at the Trade and Labour Club (Jarratt Street entrance). Discussion after meeting. All readers in Hull requested to attend. Sec., G. Vinecrad, 40, Brook Street, Hull.
- ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Sec., N. A. Bishop, 39, Poyning-rd., N.19.
- LEYTON.**—Sec., A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.
- MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park Street, Salford, Manchester.—Branch meets 2nd Wed. in month at 7.45 p.m. at offices of N.U.C., 72, Market St.
- PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets Fridays at 7 p.m., at Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn Lane. Sec., G. Shears, 200, Shirland Road, Paddington, W.9.
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- TOOTING.**—Sec., A. Yeomans, 15, University-rd., Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary 22, Dunloe-road, N.15. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dvson-rd., Levtonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.
- WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.
- WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.
- WOOD GREEN.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

Declaration of Principles.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No 273. Vol. 23.]

LONDON, MAY, 1927.

[MONTHLY, TWO PENCE.

THE I.L.P. and THEIR IDOLS.

THE CONFERENCE OF OPPORTUNISM.

The Easter I.L.P. Annual Conference has provoked much publicity in the Press, but it has not been publicity for Socialism. The hero-worship of MacDonald versus the idolatry of Maxton and Wheatley, is the tone of the controversy within the I.L.P. ranks. The entire time of the Conference was given up to discussion and disputes about policies and opinions on matters purely capitalist and opportunist.

The chairman's address was typical of Maxton, a mixture of sentimentalism and reform. His admission concerning the present tendency in the I.L.P. is worth recording :

Since the period of the Labour Government there has been a tendency for the I.L.P. to stand for the gradualist method and to postpone the achievement of Socialism to some date far in the future. (*Forward*, April 23.)

The official organ of the I.L.P. (*The New Leader*) in its report of the chairman's address, omitted this statement. The chief error in this reference by Maxton is the false view that the I.L.P. has ever been concerned about the achievement of Socialism.

That this is true *now* can be seen from Maxton's own policy outlined in his address :

Get an I.L.P. of a hundred thousand men and women, every one to be a fighter in the shock troops of that Labour army, and go out on a definite offensive against capitalism with, as the key-centre of its objective, the demand for a living wage for all.

The approach to that achievement should be first made at this stage by an immediate demand for a 20 per cent. increase on the wages of all sections of the working classes. It is necessary to make life tolerable to the great proportion of our people; it is the increase in the purchasing power of the people which is needed to lighten the industrial depression.

A definite *offensive* against capitalism with a programme of *more* capitalism paying a living wage! Making life tolerable for the workers by a 20 per cent. increase on wages —when they are allowed to work! Where is the *offensive* against capitalism in America in its employers paying what the I.L.P. calls a living wage?

When the Conference came to the proposal not to nominate Ramsay MacDonald as Labour Party Treasurer, the hero worship and idolatry burst forth. Sixty-nine Labour M.P.'s and candidates who are members of the I.L.P., had circulated a signed appreciation of Mr. MacDonald, and an appeal to the I.L.P. not to break the practice of 27 years in nominating Mr. MacDonald for Treasurer of the Labour Party.

In stating the case for the Executive of the I.L.P., Fenner Brockway said of Ramsay MacDonald's action at the last Labour Party Conference :

He was opposed to the Party on not one issue but every issue that the I.L.P. had raised at the conference. It is not that Mr. MacDonald differs from us on details of policy. It is that his attitude of mind is wholly different from the mind of the I.L.P.

Many speakers who opposed this attitude of the I.L.P., referred to MacDonald's "great work," his services to the I.L.P., etc., and even Fenner Brockway, writing in the *New Leader* on the matter (April 22nd), tells us: "Personal devotion to Mr. MacDonald within the I.L.P. is deep." In the same article Brockway says of MacDonald :

He was definitely at variance with us on our "Socialism in Our Time" policy, on China, and on international working-class unity, and did not regard war resistance as a serious policy.

There was no attack on MacDonald for his open repudiation of Socialist principles, his pleas for co-operation between Capital and Labour, his support of capitalist government in home affairs. The reason for ignoring the fundamental objections to MacDonald is very plain. If they had attacked him on such issues, the I.L.P. could be easily shown to be just as guilty of anti-Socialist actions.

But the real hero worship of MacDonald was shown after Arthur Henderson had attacked the I.L.P. action and pointed out that MacDonald would be the Labour Party Treasurer whether the I.L.P. nominated him or not. It then became important for the I.L.P.ers to show that really they were not opposed to MacDonald, and Maxton specially set out to allay all the fears of the opportunists who were afraid to offend the official gang of the Labour Party and their power to provide positions and preferment. Maxton himself in an interview said they were trying to "help MacDonald"!

In spite of all the criticism of MacDonald and his disregard for I.L.P. policies, we have the following gem given out by Maxton, the I.L.P. chairman, as the considered reply of the E.C., to Arthur Henderson. What an example of political frothblowing!

The Conference decision certainly does not prevent the I.L.P. delegation at the next Labour Party Conference voting in favour of any nomination of Mr. MacDonald as Treasurer. In his statement on Sunday, on behalf of the National Council, Brockway said that he did not suppose there was any member of the Council who wished to see Mr. MacDonald removed from the Treasurership, and the delegation will be free to decide that the I.L.P. vote shall be given for his nomination.

As regards the first question, it was made perfectly clear that we retain personal friendliness towards Mr. MacDonald, and recognise him as the Leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party, which includes members of all Sections of the Labour Party. In that capacity, whilst retaining our recognised right to express our distinctive point of view on occasions, we shall faithfully give him the support which our loyalty to the wider movement requires.

Just as at the Liverpool Labour Party Conference the I.L.P. utters strong words of defiance and censure, but at the vital moment calms down and supports the man they attacked.

The rest of the I.L.P. Conference was concerned with the repairing and supporting of a rotten system instead of a policy to abolish and replace it.

Inquiries into surtax proposals, capital

levy resurrections, municipal banks, war debt partial repudiation, nationalisation of mines—these occupied the major part of the Conference. Cheap and nasty political patent medicines was the stock-in-trade—the class struggle and Socialism were nowhere.

The left wing Communist element are disappointed with Maxton. Another lost leader! They are now searching for another leader to worship and to follow.

One point in connection with the Conference deserves notice. After all their attacks on the I.L.P., the Communist Party sent resolutions and representatives pleading for a united front with the I.L.P. on questions which have nothing to do with Socialism or Revolution. Those who want a united front with such a party of professional opportunists as the I.L.P., are obviously playing the same game of fooling the working class.

A. KOHN.

A MODERN "METROPOLIS."

Concerning a weird picture being shown at a West London cinema, we read, about robots, or semi-human automatons, who slave in the bowels of the earth, to sustain the gilded drones of their day in the sunlit atmosphere of the regions above; We are brought back to reality, however, for from a professor who has studied American life and prosperity (!) comes the information that the automaton business has actually arrived and is threatening contagion: Our prosperity, he says:—

Can only be obtained at a tragic price, not less than the transformation of millions of workers into automatons. "Fordism," which is the essence of American industry, results in the standardisation of the workman himself. . . . France has the same instinctive fear of America as symbolised by Ford, as she had of the German system on the eve of the war. (Review of a book by Professor Siegfried, *Daily News*, 13/4/27.)

Among the bogeys with which we have been confronted from time to time, we have often encountered the threatening one that Socialism would make life monotonous and stereotyped; as in other cases, so in this we answer: To observe the consummation of that which is vile, loathsome and de-humanising. Look around. MAC.

RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.

Religion in Tsarist and Soviet Russia, by W. P. COATES.
3d. Anglo-Russian Parliamentary Committee.

IS THE FRANCHISE A FRAUD?

Below we print a letter from a correspondent. The points contained in it are dealt with in our reply which follows. For convenience we have numbered the different sections of the letter.

To the Editorial Committee:

(1) While as yet my investigations are incomplete, I have established the fact that a person can exercise two Parliamentary votes provided that he or she possesses property in two divisions or holds a University degree or rank in the army or navy.

(2) Evidence points in the direction that the privilege goes beyond two votes, taking into consideration the multiplicity of the headings which qualify the capitalist class to exercise the vote and the many disqualifications that attend that of the working class, it is exceedingly doubtful if a candidate could be returned in any division to whom the Capitalist Class seriously objected. The object of this letter is to make the above public knowledge, as I have found that the common impression is that we have a franchise based upon one man one vote. The issue at stake vitally affects working class representation, and I am raising the question for discussion.

(3) I forgot to add that a person may vote by proxy, another revelation. These things make our Electoral system smell. Just imagine to yourself a large concern with multiple shops, etc., and the chance to put in votes for each one by proxy, provided that they are in separate divisions. A handful of Directors with their dependents, could exercise thousands of votes under such circumstances.

(4) I know one local instance of a family in Leicester who qualify in the three Leicester divisions for twelve votes. Now I see the reason for the Redistribution Act of 1918.

F. L. RIMINGTON.

Our correspondent has raised again a matter which has been dealt with in these columns before. It is important, not because of any so-called "democratic principle" it involves, but because of its bearing on the question of the use of the vote in order to obtain working class political control. There are anomalies in the existing franchise, but we are not concerned with them as such. We are not busybodies nobly searching for "injustices" to put right. We want

Socialism and are interested in the franchise as a means to that end. If the anomalies prevent or materially hinder the workers in gaining power, then it is necessary to expose them and work for their removal. If, on the other hand, the anomalies have no practical importance, it is contrary to working class interests to waste time on them and divert valuable energy which might more profitably be given to Socialist propaganda.

(1) Taking Mr. Rimington's first paragraph, we find that his information is not quite correct. The position is that a man, 21 years of age, may be registered as a voter on three grounds (a) 6 months' residence in a constituency whether as householder or lodger; (b) 6 months' occupation of business premises or land of which the annual value is not less than £10; (c) possession of a university degree.

A woman of 30 may be registered (a) by virtue of her husband's qualification; or (b) by 6 months' residence as a householder; or (c) by 6 months' occupation of a shop or workroom or other business premises of not less than £5 annual value; or (d) by possession of a university qualification.

In a general election a man may vote in two, but not more than two constituencies. If he is registered in more than two constituencies he may vote in all of them in bye-elections. A woman can only have two votes in a general election, if one of them is a university vote. In bye-elections she can vote wherever registered. Rank in the army or navy does not give two votes. It enables the voter, however, to vote *once only* by post as an "absent voter."

(2) Mr. Rimington says that "evidence points in the direction that the privilege goes beyond two votes . . ." This is true only of bye-elections, as shown above. He speaks of the "many disqualifications that attend . . . the working class," but does not specify these many disqualifications, or show their importance. As will be illustrated below, the overwhelming majority of the workers are, in fact, not disqualified from voting. His further surmise that a candidate could be prevented from being returned as a result of these "disqualifications" is incompatible with the facts. This also is dealt with below.

(3) Mr. Rimington evidently misunderstands the proxy vote. Only those persons may vote by proxy who (a) are already on the absent voters' list and (b) make a statement in the prescribed form that they will be at sea or out of the United Kingdom at the

time of the election. The proxy must be named in the statement. The provisions for the absent voter and for proxy voting enable seamen and other persons whose work compels them to be away from home, to register their votes. Mr. Rimington's hypothesis of "the handful of directors and their dependents" is nonsense. The proxy would enable a director, if he had two votes, to use both of them in a general election, but, as he could vote twice in any event, the position is not changed by that special provision for absent voters.

(4) Mr. Rimington instances a family who qualify for 12 votes in the three Leicester divisions. Unfortunately he does not say how many members there are in the family, but, as I have already pointed out, each could only vote at most twice in a general election, and at most three times in the unlikely event of three successive bye-elections in the three divisions.

Let us now examine the actual figures and see what these anomalies amount to.

In 1921 the number of males of 21 and over in England and Wales was approximately 10,500,000, and the number of females of 30 and over was 9,500,000. (See statistical abstract of Board of Trade, 69th number, 1926. Page 244). This gives a total of roughly 20,000,000 persons entitled to qualify in respect of age. To obtain a similar figure for 1925 it is necessary to add 1/40th, which represents the approximate estimated increase in population during the interval. (See Registrar General's Statistical Review, 1925. Page 80.) The total for 1925 is then 20,500,000.

In 1925, the total number of voters registered in England and Wales, *excluding* university voters and voters with the business premises qualification, was 18,898,409. Thus we find that including inmates of prisons, lunatic asylums, workhouses, etc., and those persons omitted from the voters' list, and those who fail to qualify for any other reason, only a little over 1,500,000 persons out of the 20,500,000 of qualifying age are not registered as voters. The bulk are women who fail to qualify as householders. This disposes of the greater part of Mr. Rimington's case.

We next come to the question of university votes and business premises votes. The total of men registered for business premises qualification in 1925 was only 217,509 for the whole of England and Wales (Registrar General Statistical Review, Page 81), and

the number of university voters, men and women, only 51,357.

Our correspondent mentioned the three Leicester Divisions. Out of a total for the three of 120,596 voters, there are only 1,995 men registered on the business premises qualification (Page 86).

We have thus shown that the anomalies are of quite negligible effect. Only in a handful of exceptional areas like the City of London, is the business premises vote considerable. (22,769 out of 43,891).

We now come to the much more important question of the distribution of votes between members of the capitalist class and the working class respectively.

The population of voting age amounts to 20,500,000. How many of these are members of the capitalist class? It is impossible to obtain any very precise estimate, but an approximate idea can be obtained in a slightly roundabout way.

In "Fabian Tract," number 5 (13th Edition, 1926. Page 18), it is estimated that the proportion of the population with incomes over £250 per annum, together with their dependents, amounts to about 13½ per cent. of the whole population. (This estimate is adapted and brought up to date from that made by Chiozza Money in "Riches and Poverty.")

It is true that below the £250 line are many shopkeepers and small property owners, but against these may be set many persons in the better paid technical and managerial positions, who earn more than £250, but are none the less members of the working class, in that they must sell their services to an employer and are wholly or mainly dependent on their earnings.

Let us further assume, in order to be on the safe side, that all members of the capitalist class of voting age are actually registered, and that all of the persons of voting age without votes are workers.

13½ per cent. of 20,500,000 gives us 2,730,000, add to 2,730,000 capitalist voters, 270,000 business premises and university votes. This gives us approximately 3,000,000 capitalist votes in England and Wales, out of the total of 19,167,275 on the voters' list in 1925. We find then that there are more than 16,000,000 working class votes to 3,000,000 capitalist votes in England and Wales. We can afford to make ample allowance for any possible margin of error in the assumptions on which we have worked, and yet be certain that the working class have

an overwhelming majority of the votes in this country. They are not prevented from registering their wishes by electoral anomalies. When they want Socialism they can vote for it. If at present defenders of capitalism are returned it is due only to the fact that the mass of the workers want capitalism and either vote for capitalist candidates or do not use their votes at all.

In these circumstances, there is no need to waste time on red-herrings like the demand for proportional representation, or the abolition of electoral anomalies. The work of getting Socialism is impeded only by the lack of Socialists, not by the existence of a handful of double votes.

It is interesting to notice in passing that the present Government has pledged itself to give the vote to women of 21 and to remove the chief barriers which at present debar many women over 30 from possessing votes. It is estimated that the proposed measure will add 5,000,000 women voters to the electoral register of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. (Note that the calculations given earlier in this article refer to England and Wales only.) Of these 5,000,000 it is stated that about 2,000,000 will be women of 30 and over at present unable to qualify. The great majority of the 5,000,000 will be members of the working class, although, of course, they may be expected, like their brothers and husbands, to vote for some form of capitalism.

H. 7

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THE INFLATION QUESTION AGAIN.

To the Editor,
SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Dear Sir,

Your reply to my letter on the money question, for which I thank you, has made clear that the differences which appear to mark off your school of thought on this subject from that of other Socialist parties, are more apparent than real.

For example, you accept credit-inflation as an incident of the war period.

You do not dispute that the period was an abnormal one.

Your indignation at the introduction by me, as you insist, of an "emphasis" in relation to the formula stated by you in the December issue, would indicate that you are less rigid in your adherence to a formula than I at first thought.

The real point of difference is, I think, to be found in the last paragraph of your reply. You state: "Gold was not permitted to function freely until the gold standard was restored in 1925." That is misleading; gold functioned freely on the *open market* from 1919, and it is on the open market only we can adequately measure the degree of credit-inflation by the depreciation of the circulating credit-units.

If credit is issued in excess of that justified by the goods produced at a given time, such goods assumed to be in direct contact with the newly-mined gold for exchange, then a state of inflation is made evident by the premium on gold.

If, however, gold is not permitted to measure itself against other commodities, at a time when metal is displaced by paper as legal tender, inflation and deflation become largely a matter of conjecture.

During the war period the Bank of England paid for the standard gold brought to it, by its notes, and at the rate of £3 17s. 9d. per ounce. That this price in paper did not give the gold magnates a value in commodities equivalent to that obtainable under conditions of normal barter, is obvious from the involuntary closing down of the less productive mines during that period.

That the currency-note was for the first time made inconvertible in 1925, is considered by you as "enormously important." Would it not also convey to one the unimportance of its "convertibility" previous to that year?

It is of no importance whatever to those anxious to delve below the superficialities involved in the best methods likely to ensure the smooth working of the gold standard, and which were embodied in the "Gold Standard Act, 1925."

The question of convertibility or inconvertibility of paper into coin is entirely beside the point and absolutely useless as far as a correct understanding of this problem is concerned. The thing that does matter is the right for any individual to do what he likes with a coin in his possession. That he shall have the right to melt or even to deface or diminish, provided the intent is not present of passing it on as current coin. Deny a person the right of laying a coin at "rest," i.e., of assuming its commodity form as a piece of metal, and you have denied him the possession of a measure of value. The principal function of money as a universal equivalent is missing, and from that moment a quantitative determination of prices will be possible, and the qualitative determination of the price-level will be relegated to the background.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,
WILLIAM NICHOLLS.

REPLY TO W. NICHOLLS.

In his previous letter, Mr. Nicholls admitted, in fact, that our contention with reference to the so-called "inflation" of the currency during and since the war, was correct.

His letter above deals with what are really side issues that leave the main point alone. When he talks of our difference from "other Socialist parties," his remark is meaningless, as there are no "other" Socialist parties in this country. Neither were we "indignant" at his introduction of an emphasis and adding it to our statement. We suggested a reason for his action, and Mr. Nicholls does not deny this suggestion.

He now states that the real point of difference is over the "free functioning" of gold on the open market. Mr. Nicholls claims that this began from 1919. This statement has no bearing on the question unless Mr. Nicholls means to say that the "open market" included this country. Mr. Nicholls is careful not to say this because, as he knows, there was no "open market" for gold here till 1925. The alteration of the arrangements made between the British Em-

pire Gold Magnates and the British Government during the war, did not affect matters here, as gold could not be exported from this country without a special permit. Hence, as stated in our previous reply, the "unpegging" of the exchange with America in 1919 did not touch the essentials of the question we were discussing.

In his paragraph beginning "If credit is issued in excess," etc., Mr. Nicholls talks of goods being in direct contact "with the newly-mined gold." Why "newly-mined"? As a matter of fact all the gold available will be considered in this relation — not merely the "newly-mined."

He also asks whether our view that making the currency note inconvertible in 1925 was enormously important, would not convey the impression that its previous convertibility was unimportant. Exactly the contrary. The "Plebs" editor considered it so important that he tried to deny the existence of this convertibility till faced with the Act of Parliament.

To say that "convertibility or inconvertibility of paper into coin is entirely beside the point" is to ignore both economic theory and historical experience. The abstract "right" of a person to "do as he likes with his own" has always to be countered by the "rights" of others. The great disadvantages caused by tampering with the currency — as clipping, sweating, etc. — caused the passing of the Coinage Acts to protect the general body of traders from the depredations of the swindlers.

Like all other laws, these Acts necessarily restricted somebody's "rights," but the advantages are found, in practice, to overwhelmingly outweigh the theoretical points of abstract "rights" thereby lost.

It may be said in passing that a coin can be treated as a piece of metal in the exchange relation, without defacing or tampering with it; and as a matter of fact this is done daily in gold transactions where coins are taken at their weight instead of by tale.

As stated before, all these questions are beside the question at issue. That question was whether the high prices prevailing during and after the war were due to inflation of the currency. We denied this excuse of the "Plebs," the Labour Party and other misleaders of the workers, and pointed out the facts. Neither they nor Mr. Nicholls have been able to show any error in our case.

ED. COM.

PSYCHIC SCIENCE.

44, Maryland Road, W.9.

Dear Comrade,

Regarding your reply to my letter in the January number of your paper, I would say that it seems to me that Materialists neglect one branch of science, namely psychic science, taking no account of phenomena, which are really well-established, seeing that they are vouched for by large numbers of well-known people, some of whom were formerly materialists themselves.

Yours fraternally,

F. BALDWIN.

95 Northview Road, N.8.

I am at a loss to understand your attitude to psychic research and spiritism when, having investigated the phenomena, Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Crookes, Sir William Barrett, Professor Flammarion, and many other eminent scientific men, do not say that the claims of spiritualists are baseless, but rather the contrary. It is illogical to argue that, because spiritualism is a stumbling block in the way of working-class economic enlightenment, therefore spiritualism is untrue. It does not follow at all.

Yours,

GEO. T. FOSTER.

OUR REPLY TO ABOVE LETTERS.

Both Florence Baldwin and Mr. Foster raise the same point in their letters, what one may call the "Great Man" point. Florence Baldwin talks of "psychic" science, but instead of telling where this "science" can be found, or the facts upon which it is based, she merely says the phenomena "are really well-established, seeing that they are vouched for by large numbers of well-known people." But the facts of a science only need demonstrating, not "vouching for" by well-known people. It is the merest truism to point out that "well-known people" have vouched for and defended fraud, superstition, crime and cruelty throughout the ages. Chattel slavery, feudal serfdom, the horrors of the Inquisition, the foul cruelties of the early days of Capitalism, particularly to women and children, and the terrible treatment meted out to native races today, have all been defended and supported and vouched for as the "proper way" by

well-known people from Royalty to parsons. The case that has only this for support must be in a specially bad way, and it reflects little credit upon the intellectual abilities of those who can find nothing else for their argument.

Mr. Foster, in addition to the above rotten creed, misquotes our reply. We did not say that because spiritism is a stumbling-block — therefore it is untrue. If Mr. Foster will take the trouble to read our reply he will see that we said exactly the reverse — namely — that because the claims of spiritists were proved to be untrue, it should be cleared out of the way. We may also correct Mr. Foster when he suggests that Professor Flammarion supports the claims of spiritists. He does not. The most he will grant is that some mediums possess abnormal, but quite human, powers. No one disputes this as a general proposition. Several "well-known people" possess abnormal power. Cinquevalli possessed extraordinarily abnormal powers, far greater than any medium ever displayed in that line. Houdini was another instance. So — till quite lately, at any rate — did Jack Dempsey. But none of these persons claimed that their powers were due to "spirits." And, as pointed out in the answer to Isabel Kingsley, the "evidence" that men like Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir William Crookes consider convincing would not impose on a child. The medium that "convinced" Sir William Crookes was twice exposed as a fraud in his presence, but he had not the honesty, or moral courage, to admit his mistake.

J. F.

NEW PAMPHLET.

We are proposing to publish a new pamphlet, but we cannot do so until we have the money. If we print 20,000 copies the cost will be in the neighbourhood of £100. We ask, therefore, for donations. As soon as we get sufficient to justify giving the order to our printer we shall be pleased to proceed.

HIGH WYCOMBE.

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c/o Mrs. J. Ricketts,
Totteridge,
near High Wycombe.

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All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

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The Socialist Standard,

MAY,

1927

THE SOCIALIST VIEW OF THE TRADE UNION BILL.

The Government, to please the "Diehards" in the Conservative Party and the more unthinking of its supporters generally, has chosen this moment to produce a Bill containing very drastic amendments of the law as it affects the trade unions. The chief provision may be summarised as follows:—

Certain sympathetic strikes and strikes for non-trade union purposes are to be declared illegal. Picketing is to be restricted. Civil Servants and unions are to be cut off from contact with outside trade unions and political parties, and local authorities are to be forbidden to give preference to trade unionists in their employ. Lastly, the member of a union who wishes to contribute to the political fund must individually express his desire to do so, instead of, as now, the onus being on the non-contributor to express his unwillingness.

Whatever the future may bring forth, the immediate effect has been to stir the officials of the trade unions to a frenzy of denunciation. It is said by many, and believed, that this is a deliberate and calculated endeavour to smash trade unionism; and to cripple the finances of the Labour Party. Believing this, the labour leaders who feel their jobs in danger will doubtless fight with more genuine enthusiasm than they displayed last

year, for instance, in the attempted General Strike.

If, however, we consider the matter calmly, it is obvious that the Government's action is not capable of so simple an explanation. Hotheads there may be in the Conservative ranks, but the big industrial and financial capitalists whose interests the Government represents, would never want trade unionism smashed, however much they may desire the removal of certain—for them—unpleasant features. The trade unions have become an integral part of the industrial and administrative machinery of Capitalism, and the fear that the proposed legislation may be pushed too far by the Tory "Diehards" has quickly induced many Conservative newspapers as well as the bulk of the Liberal press to issue a call for a less provocative attitude on the part of the Government. Both the "Daily News" (April 19th) and the Conservative "Observer" (April 17th) have particularly stressed the opposition which is being displayed to the Bill by influential employers. They can see something which should be obvious. The employing class and their Government are quite strong enough to deal with any strike, sectional or general, without altering the law. Legal changes will not increase the power of the ruling class, and will needlessly exasperate the workers. The number of strikes will not be diminished, and they may well be accompanied by an increased bitterness which may endanger Capitalist property. Votes will be lost to Conservative candidates, and the only important gains will be to the lawyers, who will net big fees by assisting the Courts to understand what the Bill means. The Bill will certainly hamper the trade unions in various ways, and will please some very vociferous Conservative supporters, but as the employers generally will probably, on balance, reap no advantage, it seems fairly certain that the Government has no intention of pushing it through as it stands, or alternatively, they do not intend to enforce it too rigidly when it has been passed. It is possible, as has been suggested, that the Bill's purpose is to distract attention from the Government's activities in China.

Of one thing we can be certain. If the workers ever feel moved again to come out on strike as in May last year, a mere declaration of the illegality of their action will not prevent them.

On the question of the Political Levy, our

position has often been stated. As we oppose the Labour Party, and do not believe that it will or can solve the major problems of the working-class, we do not want to contribute to Political Funds to finance the Labour Party through the trade unions, and we are not perturbed at this proposed alteration in the law. Members of the Socialist Party habitually decline to contribute and will continue to do so. Furthermore, we are convinced that it would be better for the trade unions if they confined themselves to definitely trade union objects. They must necessarily accept to membership Liberals, Conservatives, Labour Party supporters and Socialists, as well as people with no political allegiance. They would increase their fighting strength if they dropped their support of one Party, and thus removed a cause of apathy and disloyalty among all those who have other or no political views. The trade unions would then become more effective in struggling against the effects of Capitalism. When the workers become Socialist, they will organise politically to establish Socialism. Neither for that purpose nor in the present task of resisting the encroachments of the employers is anything gained by supporting the Labour Party.

The fact that this Bill should have provoked a more bitter political fight than we have seen for years, is itself an adequate condemnation of the Labour Party's policy. Had that party ever made Socialism the issue, it would have found itself engaged in an unceasing death-struggle with the parties defending Capitalism. Because its aim is not Socialism, but merely the reform of Capitalism, its fights have all been sham fights; it has been an honoured member of coalition governments (as during the War), and was placed in office in 1924 by Liberal votes to do specific pieces of Capitalist work. What a commentary on a political party that the first serious battle of its existence occurs because of an attack on the funds which pay the salaries and election expenses of its politicians!

BARKING & DAGENHAM.

Members and Sympathisers in the neighbourhood of Barking and Dagenham willing to co-operate in the formation of a Branch in this district are asked to communicate with:—

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AGRICULTURE AND THE WORKERS.

"Agriculture," by H. B. Pointing and Emile Burns. Labour Research Department, 162, Buckingham Palace Road. Price 6d. 64 pages.

This booklet in the L.R.D. Labour and Capital series, is a really valuable contribution to the discussion of the so-called agricultural problem from the workers' viewpoint. It is noteworthy because the writers have seen that the agricultural industry in this country is a Capitalist industry, existing in and dominated by the Capitalist system in general. This ought to be obvious to every observer, but one could read the bulk of the book and pamphlet literature on the subject, including that written by professed Socialists, without ever discovering that essential fact. One has only to consider the numerous back-to-the-land schemes which hover round the labour movement to realise the harm done by the persistence of the belief that agriculture is in a marked way different from other Capitalist industries. Almost every day we hear of some Labour "thinker" suggesting that the unemployment problem can be solved by promoting the growth of more food in this country instead of importing it, and thus increasing the number of workers employed on the land. Why does no one ever suggest putting the unemployed into the mines or the engineering shops? Why do we hear perpetual moans because some less fertile land is going out of cultivation. Yet no one ever protests because inefficient mines cease to be worked. At bottom, it is due, as we have stated, not to any fundamental difference between the economic laws governing agriculture and mining—there is no difference.

The confusion arises from the habit of sentimentalising about mother earth instead of applying the Marxian analysis and the test of working-class interests. This booklet should be a useful corrective to these old bad habits of thought.

It analyses agricultural production and the distribution of profits, with ample and up-to-date figures from the 1921 population census and the 1925 Agricultural Census (published in March, 1927).

Chapter II., dealing with productivity, shows that between 1871 and 1901, although the number of persons engaged in agriculture declined by 30 per cent., production fell at most 10 per cent., and probably not at all. In other words, the output per worker has been and is increasing. On page 14 it

is bluntly stated that before the war the productivity of world agriculture "was rising less rapidly than that of world trade." The phrasing is bad, but presumably it is intended to mean that agricultural productivity was falling behind industrial productivity. If so, it is a statement which calls for evidence. Its importance lies in the backing it gives for the Neo-Malthusian fallacy that food supplies are declining relatively to population. If it were true, we would expect to find agricultural prices rising in relation to industrial prices, and as was clearly demonstrated by Sir W. Beveridge in his address to the British Association in 1923 and in his subsequent controversy with Mr. Keynes, this is not the fact.

Chapter IV. deals with wages, and Chapter V. with trade unions in agriculture.

Chapter VI. on "The Future of Agriculture" effectively disposes of the small-holdings myth. A table on page 54 shows how much greater is the output per man on large farms than on small. It is gratifying to know that although all three parties favour small-holdings they are not holding their own.

There is one somewhat serious criticism of the book, but it probably touches the L.R.D. rather than the writers. The agricultural programmes of the three parties are given, but the fact is not honestly faced that not one of the three proposes any fundamental change in the position of the working-class employed in agriculture. The workers are exploited because, being propertyless, they must seek employment as wage-earners. The Labour Party urges Nationalisation of the land, and a "living wage" (whatever that may be), but it does not propose the common ownership of the means of production, either industrial or agricultural. As the writers themselves point out (page 52),

"Security of tenure for the farmer, compensation for improvements, reduced taxation, co-operative marketing, stability of prices, cheap State credit, and all the other medicines offered to the capitalist groups in agriculture—all of these are advantages for one or other of the capitalist groups, but may mean little to the workers. . . In fact, these proposed measures, if successfully applied, would strengthen the position of the farmers, and give them greater advantages in their struggle against the workers."

They go on to show that Nationalisation will not improve and may actually worsen the position of the land-workers, but they avoid applying to the Labour Party programme the condemnation it deserves. This

happens, no doubt, because the L.R.D. dare not risk offending its non-Socialist Labour Party supporters. The L.R.D.'s discretion in this matter is understandable, but the usefulness of their publications is greatly diminished by the subordination of independent criticism to the propaganda needs of the Labour Party or the Co-operative Society, or any other propagandist body.

However, we can confidently urge every student of Socialism to get this booklet if he wants (as he should) to understand the structure and tendencies of British agriculture.

The authoritative statistics alone are worth the price. There is a bad misprint on the last line of page 52—"farmer" should obviously read "former." H.

THE ANTI-SOCIALIST UNION RUNS AWAY AGAIN.

Years before the war the Anti-Socialist Union decided that it would not debate with the Socialist Party, although it was willing enough to meet the numerous bodies which misrepresented the Socialist case, because they were afraid to accept the full implications of Socialism. The excuse of the A.S.U. was that we had printed a scurrilous article on the occasion of the coronation of George V. They declared that such vile matter ought never to have seen the light of day and they would not countenance it even to the extent of opposing us in debate. Yet the declared object of the A.S.U. was precisely this work of opposing Socialist propaganda! The Anti-Socialist Union promptly demonstrated its sincerity by circulating this same scurrilous article among potential givers of donations, in order to scare them into paying up. We pointed out then, that the A.S.U. was a fraud. It obtained money under false pretences, since it was unwilling to carry out its nominal purpose of fighting Socialism. It has now changed its name to "The Anti-Socialist and Anti-Communist Union," but it has not grown either more honest or more courageous.

On March 28th, a Mr. Norman, speaking on Tower Hill, expressed to one of our members his willingness to debate, and invited us to approach the Union to make the necessary arrangements. Their reply and our subsequent letter are printed on facing page. No further comment is needed.

The Anti-Socialist and Anti-Communist Union,

58 and 60, Victoria Street,
Westminster, S.W.1.

April 5th, 1927.

DEAR SIR,

In reply to your letter of the 1st inst., I have to say that it will be impossible for us to arrange for Mr. Norman to take part in a debate with you, owing to the very large number of meetings which have been arranged for him in different parts of the country.

I may say, however, that Mr. Norman has debated on many occasions, during the past winter, with prominent Socialists, under the auspices of this organization.

Yours faithfully,

The Director,
Public Speaking Class.

Socialist Party of Great Britain.

8th April, 1927.

The Director of Public Speaking Classes,
The Anti-Socialist and Anti-Communist Union, 58, Victoria Street, S.W.1.

DEAR SIR,

I learn with surprise that Mr. Norman will not be able to debate with the Socialist Party. It would seem reasonable to suppose that Mr. Norman was aware of the large number of meetings he is engaged to address at the time of accepting the offer to debate with us; why then did he accept it?

The fact that Mr. Norman has already debated with representatives of other Parties hardly seems to have any bearing on his expressed willingness and your refusal to debate with a representative of the Socialist Party.

Yours fraternally,
Acting General Secretary.

NOTICE !!

The continuation of the Plechanoff articles on "The Monistic Conception of History" is still postponed owing to the translator's pressure of work. We expect to be able to continue the articles shortly.

MATERIALISM v. SPIRITISM.

To the Editor,

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Dear Comrade,

It is only the great importance of the subject under discussion that induces me to continue a controversy in which my opponent, conscious of the weakness of his case, stoops to personal abuse. I will leave it to your readers to judge which of us, your reviewer or myself, has been guilty of "evasions, assumptions and misrepresentations."

The Society for Psychical Research was NOT "founded by Spiritists," and it has never hesitated to expose fraudulent mediumship when it met with it. If J. Fitzgerald were up-to-date in his knowledge of its methods, he would know that nowadays mediums never dictate the conditions of the seances arranged by the Society. It is simply laughable to read my opponent's description of its publications as "chatter, drivel, and ramblings," when we know that the Society number amongst its members scientists of the standing of Madame Currie, Dr. Hans Driesch and Professor Julian Huxley. So much for the first and second points raised by your reviewer.

I now come to points three and four. Years before Einstein the Theory of Relativity was anticipated in occult writings, which called in question the then accepted dogmas of Space and Time, and, moreover, regarded Matter itself as a "derived" instead of a fundamental concept. Occultism also declared that there had existed very early civilisations resembling our own (see Mrs. Besant's "Man—Whence, Whither?") and later, archaeologists laid bare the traces of the Minoan civilisation with its modern system of sanitation. Occult science has always taught the underlying unity of all created things—one spirit but many forms. Now orthodox biology surveys the entire zoological series, and sees the psyche increasing in powers and capabilities as we rise higher and higher in the scale. But the chief discovery of occultism is the super-normal powers of man, and modern science has by hundreds of recorded laboratory experiments by first-class men, incontrovertibly proved that the phenomena due to these powers are true occurrences in nature. I refer readers to the writings of Osty, Tischner, Richet, Geley, and Schrenk-Notzing, now obtainable at Boot's Libraries. These

things are not matters of opinion, but of hard fact. The objection that since they were known to primitive man they must be "cleared out of the way," has no validity whatever. On the contrary, the antiquity and wide prevalence of the ideas constitute a claim on the attention of the unprejudiced. We are here in the presence of faculties or senses, more or less latent, but at the same time universally distributed, which form part of the general heritage of mankind.

In conclusion, I brand as a wicked lie your reviewer's assertion that my pamphlet contains "pages of abuse of Marx." I challenge him to quote ONE WORD of the kind from my pamphlet. Marx's view of the universe was that generally held in his day. His true glory, obscured by his followers, is that his idea of society should be so much in line with the idealistic reactions of today against materialist science.

Yours fraternally,
ISABEL KINGSLEY.

After accusing Marx, among other things, of intellectual dishonesty, and myself of ignorance of the subject I was criticising, Isabel Kingsley now claims that her opponent, "conscious of the weakness of his case, stoops to personal abuse"!

The readers will certainly be able to judge of the "evasions, assumptions and misrepresentations" as the numerous quotations from her pamphlet given in the review published in the October, 1926, SOCIALIST STANDARD, prove the truth of my charges. Isabel Kingsley has not made the slightest attempt in any of her letters to meet those charges. The only shadow of a reply is the hysterical shriek that it is "a wicked lie" to say that she abuses Marx, and her challenge to me to quote "ONE WORD" of the kind from her pamphlet. Why does she not read the instances given in the October, 1926 issue? There it was pointed out that on page 13 of her pamphlet she says:—

"Never was there a less scientific mind than Marx nor a less scientific book than 'Capital'."

Perhaps, with her peculiar mentality, Isabel Kingsley thinks it is praise. This point is further emphasised on the same page, when she says that Marx's theory of value "is not a scientific deduction; it is an ideal of social ethics, a moral ideal"; while it is extended on page 15, when we are told:—"Marx's method in 'Capital' is the method of the moralist. He first postulates on ab-

solute morality." This is only one of the falsifications of Marx given in the pamphlet. Worse than these is the direct charge of dishonesty levelled against Marx on the same page where Isabel Kingsley says:—

"No doubt Marx realised that the law of determinism, if valid, would tend to paralyse all revolutionary action by making us condone the brutalities of capitalism on the ground that those responsible for them were automata moved by some impersonal force called history."

Thus, having first twisted Marx's theory from the "Materialist Conception of History" into "Economic Determinism," our authoress then suggests that Marx disbelieved his own theory! But perhaps the greatest, if more subtle, instance of abuse, as pointed out in the review of the pamphlet, is Isabel Kingsley's deliberate refusal to quote a single word from Marx on his theory, but to substitute a travesty from a Capitalist publication in its place. After perpetrating such a dirty trick, she does well to protest against a truthful description of her attitude as abuse.

On her defence of Spiritism, the reader will notice that although this is her third letter on the subject, she makes no attempt to bring forward any evidence to support her case. As in her pamphlet, all that is done is to make various assertions without a single fact to back them up. Her only reply to my statement that the Society for Psychical Research was founded by Spiritists is to say—in capital letters—that it was NOT so founded.

This retort raises an interesting—and instructive—point. Does Isabel Kingsley know who founded the S.P.R.? If she does not, and the extremely superficial character of her writings gives some support to such a view, then why wildly deny my statement? If she *does* know, then why did she not quote their names and so smash my argument? The answer to this is easy. Here are the names of the four men who founded the S.P.R.: Frederick W. H. Myers, Henry Sidgwick, Edmund Gurney and William Barrett—all well-known leading Spiritists.

When our authoress says "that nowadays mediums never dictate the conditions of the seances," she is guilty of another deliberate mis-statement. Eusapia Palladino refused to allow a Committee of the S.P.R. to uncover her feet during a test seance (F. Podmore, *Newer Spiritualism*, page 117).

"Eva C.," one of Conan Doyle's "white angels," insisted upon her clothing being left in a certain manner to suit herself.

The Thomas brothers—other of Conan Doyle's loudly advertised marvels from Wales—refused to allow Stuart Cumberland to be present at the seance they gave in London. Unfortunately for the mediums, the latter gentleman **was allowed** to assist in arranging the preliminaries with the result that nothing more wonderful happened than a pair of braces being thrown upon a sitter's knees—a terrible disappointment to those who thought there "must be something in it," because of Conan Doyle's extravagant claims. But the over-riding fact that shows the falsity of Isabel Kingsley's statement is that *all* seances are held in shaded or red light or else in total darkness. When it is remembered that conjuring tricks far more marvellous than anything ever performed at a seance, are given every week-night on music halls in brilliant light, and yet completely mystify the audiences, one may judge the value of the mediums' tricks.

The only attempt at a reply to my description of the contents of the 40 volumes of proceedings is to give the names of three scientists who are members of the S.P.R. But what does Isabel Kingsley mean by this? Does she wish to suggest that these scientists are responsible for the contents of these volumes? If not, then why give their names? If she does suggest it, the only answer is that she is again guilty of deliberate falsification. The bulk of the contents of these volumes are descriptions of seances, and so-called supernormal occurrences. In many instances they read like conversations in Bedlam, or conferences among persons in an advanced state of intoxication. Has my opponent read these volumes herself? If so, what has she to say to the statement of one of the S.P.R.'s own committees, when they remark:—

"Further we would warn future readers that the details of the evidence are in many cases not only dull, but of a trivial and even ludicrous kind." (Proceedings S.P.R., Vol. 1, page 118.)

One can certainly agree with this after reading the stuff. This trick of quoting names is, of course, an old one with defenders of Spiritism. When, however, one turns to "evidence" that is supposed to have convinced many of these scientists the reader is amazed at the credulity that can swallow such drivel. One example is the seance held by Sir Oliver Lodge with Mrs. Thompson at the former's house in Birmingham. The conversation of the supposed F. W. H. Myers that Lodge says "was in fact as convincing as anything that could

be imagined" ("Survival of Man," p. 290) was too stupid to impose upon a school-child in an inquiring frame of mind.

I asked for *one* scientific discovery that confirms occultism or Spiritism. In her third paragraph of about 250 words, she has to admit that she does not know of one, for the whole paragraph consists of vague assertions without a single fact or quotation to support them.

The history of Spiritism is one long record of fraud and swindling. Practically every prominent medium—whether paid or unpaid—has been proven a fraud, while not a single "miracle" has been produced when the conditions have been at all stringent. In other words, while fraud has been proven as rampant throughout the Spiritist movement, not a single claim of anything "supernatural" has ever been established.

J. FITZGERALD.

MUSSOLINI AND PARLIAMENT.

To Editorial Committee:

I read with interest your reply to Ketter "Mussolini and Parliament."

You state that Mussolini was returned to Parliament with a majority of his supporters. Surely, comrades, you have made a grave mistake, as he gained power through the now well-known "March on Rome." His majority came at an election after he had changed the election laws of Italy and crushed the organisations which opposed him. He cares little for majorities as he frankly states, as long as his own followers are well armed in support of the present system. However, it does prove the foolishness of supporting leaders, as at the time of the coup d'état in Italy, his party was more republican, and its home policy different to the present one; it has changed to suit him and the Capitalist interests.

Although I keenly support the need for a majority of Socialists in Parliament (if possible), yet I see the danger of such methods being used here in this country. The boss class may "close down" the House if it suits their purpose. This may come, as in Italy, through confusion in the working-class organisations.

Yours fraternally, S. W.

The "grave mistake" lies with "S.W." Had he read the description of the so-called

"March on Rome" at the time it took place, he would know that the half-armed rabble that followed Mussolini on that occasion bore no comparison with the better-armed and more highly-drilled body Mussolini commands to-day. When this rabble reached Rome, they were not allowed to enter the city, as the regular soldiers denied them admittance. The commanding officer of these soldiers who offered to clear Mussolini's crowd out of the place in an hour, found to his disagreeable surprise that not only was he *not* to drive them out, but received orders to let them in. It suited the Capitalist government to let Mussolini take charge of affairs owing to the strained conditions of the time. It still suits them to let him continue in charge.

When the Capitalists no longer need this opera-bouffe hero as a "smoke-screen" between themselves and the Italian workers, Mussolini will be kicked out like an office-boy.

"S.W." is also wrong about the election laws. These were altered after Mussolini had been elected by a majority of those voting. Conditions here are different from those existing in Italy, and the "closing down" of the House of Parliament, apart from a special temporary crisis, a much more difficult matter. Ed., Com.

THE MASK OFF IN CHINA.

"What's What in China." Price 1d. L.R.D., 162, Buckingham Palace Road.

This 16 page booklet is "A description of the forces involved in the struggle in China, and of the interests they represent." It serves a useful purpose in shedding a little light on the confusion in the Chinese struggles, but it suffers from the stupid and inexcusable vice of assuming that Chinese nationalism is for some reason, never to my knowledge stated, different in kind from Irish, German, British and other brands of patriotism. All forms of nationalism are in origin and effect anti-socialist and anti-working-class. Barely was this booklet off the press when events—as we foretold they would—proved how unsound is the view that the working-class movement should support Chinese nationalism, or any nationalism. On page 7 the author writes of the Cantonese movement that the class conflict within its ranks "has for the time being been softened by the formation of the united front," and

that "Chiang-Kai-Shek (Commander-in-Chief), has not hitherto shown himself any more tender towards the interests of the foreign capitalists than have the Communists or any other section of trade unionists of China" (Page 9), and lastly that "The single control of the Southerners is exercised by a civilian government to which the military are strictly subject" (Page 7).

There is, of course, every reason why Chinese capitalists should be opposed to foreign capitalists, since they both wish to exploit the Chinese workers, but what we want to emphasise is that the Chinese capitalist nationalist movement is anti-working-class. At the moment Chiang-Kai-Shek is demanding the dismissal of certain civil ministers of the Cantonese Government (*Daily News*, 16th April), and has, during the past week or so, been busily engaged in dissolving trade unions by military force and in shooting Communists and others who were misguided enough to think that workers who offer themselves up for sacrifice as cannon-fodder in nationalist wars, thereby obtain the right to a voice in the policies of their capitalist masters.

Mr. Arthur Ransome recently interviewed Borodin, the Russian adviser to the Cantonese, on the aims of the Chinese movement. Borodin is quite frank:—"At present and for years to come Communists and Capitalists alike in China must have the same ideal of a prosperous and much more highly developed industrial China and a general rise in Chinese standards of living The Chinese Nationalists want an agrarian revolution, but they want it in order to clear the way for China's capitalist development."—(*Manchester Guardian*, 20th April.)

We recognize, as Marx recognized, that China, like other backward countries, must pass through the stage of capitalist development, but that is no reason for deluding the workers there or here into the belief that nationalism is anything but a capitalist movement. Premature attempts to seize power before economic conditions are ripe and before the workers are numerous enough and conscious enough to make success thinkable, are foredoomed to failure. Racial prejudices are aroused among the workers by association with Nationalist propaganda, violence is encouraged as a substitute for political education and organization, and the resulting disappointment, bitterness and social unsettlement are not conducive to rapid or orderly development of the working-

class movement. Those organisations in this country which support any nationalist movement are deceiving the workers if not themselves, and are demonstrating their unfitness to claim to speak in the name of Socialism. H.

THE COST OF LIVING INDEX.

A correspondent writes to point out that the cost of living index figure issued by the Ministry of Labour is inaccurate, "yet," he says, "it is around that figure that Trade Union officials weave their settlements." As he does not give details of his criticism of the accuracy of the figures, it is a little difficult to go into the question. It must, however, be conceded that the cost of living index figures can only be described as inaccurate if it can be shown that they fail to tell us what they claim to tell. No evidence has ever been brought to show that they are "faked," and it is not the least bit likely that they are. The claim made for them is that they "are designed to measure the average increase in the cost of maintaining unchanged the pre-war standard of living of the working classes The effect is to obtain approximately the average percentage increase in the cost of maintaining the pre-war standard of living in working-class families" (Ministry of Labour Gazette, February, 1921). Now it is exceedingly difficult to discover how closely the figures approximate to the real position. The Labour Party some years ago set up a commission of enquiry which satisfied itself that the index understates the real average increase in the cost of living of a working-class family.

While many statisticians take the view that the error is in the direction of overstatement. One difficulty is that many items of the present working-class budget were absent from the pre-war budget, and vice-versa. Again, the relative position of different sections of the working-class has changed; so-called "unskilled" workers are somewhat better off, and many "skilled" workers considerably worse off than in 1914. Also, it must be remembered that the figure is an *average* figure. The figure is not invalidated by showing that in certain areas or for certain groups it is too high or too low. Since it is based upon the assumption that workers live in "controlled" houses, it will fail to give a true picture of those workers who have to pay higher "de-controlled" rents.

The real point in the criticism centres round the use that is made of the Index Figure in wage agreements, and here, we think, our correspondent in ascribing to the Index Figure something which is, in fact, due to the political backwardness of the workers, and to the hard facts of the capitalist system. It is not the cost of living figures which compel the engineer, or the miner, to accept wages which leave them poorer than in 1914. It is the ability of the employers to get all the labour they require without paying more for it than they do. If they needed considerably more miners or engineers, they would doubtless have to pay higher wages to get them, Index Figures notwithstanding. On the other hand, some groups of workers are getting a higher real wage than in 1914, due to changes in the demand for their particular kind of skill. In the long run these discrepancies tend to disappear, but, in the meantime, Index Figures are not the dominant factor in securing or preventing wage increases or decreases. It is true that most workers and their leaders are saturated with capitalist economic theories, which teach them that they should be content to accept the existing or the pre-war distribution of wealth without demur, and they accordingly come to look upon the cost of living Index as a kind of divine indication of what wages ought to be, but this is the fault not of the figures, but of the workers who use them so. If they accepted the Socialist view that receivers of unearned incomes are parasites, they would not allow innocent figures or ignorant Trade Union officials to stand between them and the overthrow of the capitalist system. ED. COMM.

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Mondays: Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.

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WOOD GREEN. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY
OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

Declaration of Principles.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great
Britain

HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, centers the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE Socialist Standard

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LONDON, JUNE, 1927.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

THE SCIENCE OF REVOLUTION.

A crimson-covered volume of some two hundred and odd pages has come to hand possessing the above ambitious title. The author, Max Eastman, poses as something of a psychologist of the analytical type, having apparently imbibed Freud in large doses. Thus fortified, he trains his critical guns upon what he regards as the tottering fabric of the Marxian philosophy, or as he terms it, "dialectic materialism"; which procedure, he would have us believe, is animated by nothing more than a friendly desire to rid Marxism of a paralysing encumbrance, and to convert it, at last, into a real practical science.

The effect is somewhat bewildering, to say the least of it, and the present scribe, afflicted with a mere working-class education, candidly confesses his inability to make any practical head or tail of the involved argumentation in which Mr. Eastman indulges. In his first chapter on "The Function of Thinking," he drills into the reader the idea that "Thought is *purposive*," yet at the end of the book the said reader is left guessing as to just what purpose the author considers himself to have served.

There is not a single criticism of Marx that is new in the whole volume, and nothing is added, even by way of suggestion or example, to our knowledge of the social revolution. All that the author attempts is to shake the confidence of the Marxist in the reality and objective basis of his conclusions. Economic knowledge is derided and belittled, and a simple faith in our own desires and will is offered as a substitute. All this, of course, the author would have us lay at the door of psychology.

According to Mr. Eastman, Marx's con-

ception of history as a process based upon economic development, was merely a "rationalisation" of his desire for a revolution. We are asked to believe that in the "idealological" and "metaphysical" pages of "Capital," Marx satisfied the mystic yearnings of his soul by philosophical communion with an "Economic God" of his own invention.

The present writer is not, of course, in a position to divulge what subtle "complex" dominates Mr. Eastman's mind, but it appears to be one which leads him, for some obscure reason, into hostility against any form of abstract thought as applied to history and economics. He would throw overboard both metaphysics and dialectics and confine himself to the common-sense methods of practical investigation. Yet in the realm of biology he accepts Darwin and in psychology he accepts Freud.

He appears to be unable to see that both of these investigators are compelled to use the dialectical method whenever they generalise their conclusions, and leave for the nonce the realm of particular facts.

Darwin was forced to connect the evolution of organisms with changes in the earth's crust. Are we therefore entitled to suggest that he was merely "rationalising" a subconscious hostility to the Book of Genesis? Marx, we are told, does not explain the practical variations in prices, etc., by his theory of value. Neither did Darwin attempt to explain the variations which occur in every succeeding generation. He looked for the law of survival and found it—horror of horrors, Mr. Eastman—in the material conditions of existence which alone could determine what were "favourable" variations,

regardless of the will and desire of unfavourable ones.

In the sphere of psychological theory, Freud elaborates the conception of a "conflict" between the conscious and the unconscious mental processes. This he attributes to the existence of a censorship which represses the thoughts and feelings incompatible with civilised behaviour. Obviously, as Freud himself admits, this censorship is nothing but the reflection in the individual mind of the social conventions necessarily arising from a given stage of economic development. The professed object of psychoanalysts is to resolve the conflict, i.e., to bring the buried "wish" into harmony with reality, and what is this, Mr. Eastman, but the essence of dialectics?

It matters not to what realm of investigation we turn, the same law holds good, that a thing is and moves, and has its being only in relation to that which is not itself. So-called realists like our author may wriggle this way and that, but the only practical way of escape from the barren waste of metaphysics is the dialectical materialism which they affect to despise.

This is obvious whenever a scientist leaves his own realm and pronounces as with pontifical authority upon some subject of general interest of which his knowledge may easily be less than that of the average man. Men like Crookes and Lodge, for example, exhibit all the vices of the metaphysician when dealing with the subject of spiritism, while the number of Anti-Socialist professors has not been counted.

Marx's "metaphysics" were attacked and the attacks answered by him in his own preface to "Capital" long before Mr. Eastman was heard of. Economic forces being social in character, cannot be dealt with in the same way as chemical compounds. Acids and microscopes are useless when we want to analyse a commodity.

Only the force of abstraction can help us. Abandon that force, and a science of economics becomes impossible, and we are left a prey to every Utopian fantasy liable to be misled by any will-o'-the-wisp "reform," whether proposed by the professional politician or the crack-brained "rebel."

Mr. Eastman endeavours to maintain that an idea cannot at one and the same time be a "reflex" of conditions, expressing some class interest, and also have objective validity. He holds that the Marxian "ideology" is thus no more scientific than the

"ideologies" of the capitalist class, which it attempts to replace. In other words, Marx only saw what he wanted to see and described the result as "science!" This line of argument leads us to the conclusion that a truth ceases to be such if we want to make use of it. Thus, mechanics are no more scientific than magicians, since they simply express in their theories a "rationalised" form of their desire to control the universe.

For sheer puerility, some of the self-styled "psychologists" would be hard to beat, but as Engels has it, "The proof of the pudding lies in the eating, and human action had solved the problem long before human ingenuity had invented it."

The soundness of Marx's economic view is evidenced by facts which become daily more obvious, e.g., the concentration of capital and the intensification of exploitation, and of the consequent class-struggle. Mr. Eastman affects to regard these facts as immaterial to the main issue. "Look at Russia!" he exclaims. "Never mind about whether the triumph of the proletariat is inevitable! Suffice that it is possible." Yet in a very few pages further on he has to lament the appalling growth of *bureaucracy* in Russia!

Lenin, of course, comes in for eulogy in comparison with poor old Marx.

We have the "brilliant social revolutionary engineer" held up to admiration in comparison with the "foggy old metaphysician."

The Bolshevik upheaval proved Marx wrong according to Mr. Eastman. Had it succeeded in its alleged object, we might agree with him, but all the evidence of its failure surely proves that Marx was right, and that social and political forms cannot be forced upon countries where the backward economic conditions make them premature.

Throughout the book the author negligently confuses historical materialism with "economic determinism," and blind fatalism. He follows innumerable bourgeois "critics" of Marx in attributing contradictions to his thought which do not exist, and generally re-hashes all the stale metaphysical dualism in the guise of psychology. It is difficult, however, to believe that Professor Freud would recognise many of his "disciples" who appear anxious to show themselves off as "Jacks" in all and sundry.

dry branches of inquiry and "masters" of none.

As for dialectics, this method of reasoning will no doubt survive the attempts on the part of the "Communists" to drag it in as a support for their alternate criticism and support of Labour leaders; but this is a practical question of working-class politics here and now, which appears to be beneath the notice of such a "practical scientist" as Mr. Eastman.

E. B.

WEST HAM BRANCH.

A series of propaganda meetings are being held from June 13th to 17th inclusive, at Water Lane, at 8 p.m.

EAST HAM.

Sympathisers in East Ham and district willing to co-operate in the formation of a branch, are invited to communicate with the General Secretary at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1.

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AT THE STREET CORNER.

One of our earliest, and one of our wisest decisions of policy, was that wherein we allowed an opponent access to our platform. Having heard our case, and subject only to the common usages and decencies of debate, we offer any opponent the right to oppose us, on our own platform. We believe that, as a party, we are unique in this respect. But then, of course, we are unique in having a position that we know will stand the test. Obviously a case can be made out for anything, even the most absurd proposition, if you ignore enough, and throttle the opposition. So that propagandist parties of all sorts, religious or political, who decline to allow their statements to be combated, where and when uttered, stand self-condemned of cowardice or dishonesty.

To allow questions is not enough. Their very allowance is often transparent trickery, for a false position can rarely be overthrown by one question. As soon as a questioner follows up by supplementaries, one usually finds the speaker evading an issue by saying the questioner is selfishly monopolising too much attention. He should give someone else a chance.

Or again, an awkward question is parried by another question from the speaker, or met by a provocative remark, and the succeeding jeers and howls used as a cover, whilst a more congenial questioner is baited. This is notoriously the method of the Anti-Socialist Union, and analogous bodies. They will not permit anyone on their platform to state a reasoned opposition. Oh, no! But questions! Bless you, yes!

There was a speaker the other day in a London market place, representing the British Empire Union. His remarks were a strange blend of sense and fallacy. He said, very wisely, "Do not be led hither and thither by leaders of any sort. Do not read the exclusive literature of any one party; read all, and come to your own conclusions. Read and think deeply," he said. "Do not hurry to a decision, but let what you read and hear, have time to digest in your brain and then, as an individualist, stick to your own opinion." How wise! How sensible! It impressed the audience. But someone asked him what he meant by an "individualist," a term he had used rather frequently. He replied: "One who believed in making his own bargain with an employer, and not being dictated to by a union." Then, of

course, the storm broke. Howls and jeers from obvious Labour adherents, gradually died down into questions, dealt with as outlined above. Then the mention of China was seized upon by the speaker as a useful get-out, and a peg upon which to jibe at the Labour Party and then invite further questions. Did he think it right, asked one questioner, that the Chinese women and children of Shanghai should have to work 14 hours a day in the cotton mills. As an "individualist," replied the speaker, he believed anyone should have the unquestioned right to work as many hours as they wished. More howls and jeers, and then a quiet, insistent little man who had evidently thought out a short series of consecutive questions, got a hearing with his first one. "What was the cause of the trouble in China?" he asked. Twice the speaker ignored him. The third time the speaker paused, waved the crowd into comparative silence, and replied: "I don't know, do you?" Bang went the little man's series. Thrown on the defensive, he said, "But I'm asking you." "Yes," retorted the speaker, "but I don't know. I'm asking you." Bravely the little man started to explain conditions in the cotton mills in Shanghai when the lecturer interrupted by asking which mills, British or Chinese. The little man was not quite certain, but said both, when the speaker followed up by saying, "How many British mills are there out there?" The little man got nettled and said "I do not know, and the number is immaterial. What I contend—" "Oh, no!" said the speaker, "you are not sure of your facts. Let us have the facts," and so on. Collapse of the little man.

So that the acceptance of questions at a public meeting does not constitute it a fair vehicle for the diffusion of views. Politics is essentially a subject for public discussion, and that cannot be called discussion which says "These are our views. You may ask us questions about them, but we will not allow your contrary views to be heard."

Obviously, the British Empire Union is not concerned with the dissemination of accurate views, for its speakers must know perfectly well that the phenomenon they call an "individualist" cannot exist in human society. They must know that in ten short minutes a capable opponent could make the absurdity of such a claim apparent to the simplest intelligence. They must know, in spite of their waving of Union Jacks and their blether of King and Country, that the

Government gave very short shift to "individualists" during the War or during the coal trouble. The B.E.U. therefore, take no chances. The capable opponent is kept off their platform. He may question, but not expound.

The Socialist Party is not built that way. We have a position, a philosophy, a policy, which has been tested in every possible way. Scientists, economists, politicians, have attacked it, belittled it, sneered at it, but Socialism remains. It is the one subject that is the common talk of the whole civilised world. Wherever human progress has attained the stage known as Capitalism, there inevitably the problems it raises are sure to be soluble in only one way. Nothing hinders its steady onward march. Even a world-war, overturning thrones and making hay of political frontiers, leaves Socialism still the talk of the world, and the hope of millions. As a policy, we of the Socialist Party have always realised that Socialism can only come when the majority of people want it. We conceive it our task therefore, to convert a majority of people to our point of view. With this clear object before us, we believe there cannot be too much opportunity for discussion. We are so convinced of the impregnable strength of our position that our platform is open to anyone who cares to try to prove us wrong. We have nothing to hide, no secrets to keep, no leaders to apologise for, nothing but straight Socialism to preach. So we have nothing to fear. If anyone thinks we are crying for the moon, or are on a wild-goose chase, he is at liberty to tell us so. If he can prove it, he will save us wasting our precious time, and so do us a service. On the other hand, if we can in turn show that he is harbouring delusions unawares, he should be indebted to us. We have everything to gain by discussion. Can it be said that any of our political opponents are similarly anxious for discussion, or that they are prepared to offer equal facilities? Try them and see. And in the meantime read our pamphlet called Socialism, still obtainable at the modest price of twopence (plus postage) in spite of its 48 packed pages.

W. T. H.

NEW YORK.

Readers and sympathisers in New York are invited to communicate with the Socialist Educational Society at 557, Amboy Street, Brooklyn, New York.

INCENTIVE—YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY

A few thousand years ago, before the world had become thoroughly civilised, young men and old men lived on a Spartan diet, and worked arduously in order that they might become pre-eminent in games, in the arts and in warfare. Their sole recompense, apart from that personal feeling of satisfaction, was the approbation of their fellows expressed in the form of a crown of bay leaves or some similar token of public appreciation.

Since those healthy times, the unhealthy influence of Commerce has cankered the sources of action and the Daily Press periodically provides us with the sordid details of boxers who will only box if thousands of pounds is guaranteed to them; tennis players, golfers and all the rest who make a like proviso. We are even told that England cannot hear the best singers and musicians often because sufficient cash is not forthcoming. The old slogans "Art for Art's sake" and "Art for Life's sake," are rapidly being transformed into the miserable howl of "Art for Money's sake."

It has become usual, with a self-satisfied feeling of genius unrecognised (particularly among the so-called "Intellectuals") to blame that mysterious entity the "Public" for this state of affairs. It were better to observe the source of the trouble, which lies in a social organisation that compels people to think of income before work. Fortunately for us, though unfortunately for themselves, there are still plenty of people who place joy in the work of their hands and brains before income, but, in many cases, this healthy attitude brings a direful end, as the records of penury and suicide, and of the workhouses and lunatic asylums abundantly prove.

What, from the point of view of incentive, can be more sordid than the following extract from the "Daily News," of April 18th, 1927:—

Gertrude Ederle, the New York girl who swam the English Channel, is complaining that the fortune she was promised is not reaching her.

Critics of her management point out that excitement in America was allowed to cool while her father carried her off to Germany to "swank" to his old compatriots, and that when she returned, and New York itself went wild about her, her advisers' ideas grew so inflated that they frightened good money away.

The facts are that in the six months of last year in which she had her great record to capi-

talise "Trudy" Ederle got nothing out of it but a nine weeks' music-hall contract. All the customary "by-products" of sporting success which are exploited here were neglected.

It is true that for her music-hall performance Miss Ederle still receives £1,200 a week. But she has been explaining how the money goes before she touches it. Here is her balance sheet:

A Week	
Her lawyer, Dudley Malone	£200
Her father	£200
Agent for her act	£120
Publicity agent	£35
Manager	£40
Two girl divers	£100
Man setting up tank	£20

This leaves £485 a week, from which Miss Ederle herself pays the fares, travelling expenses of seven people and charges for the water used in the tank on the stage, probably £60 a week at least, leaving out of her £1,200 about £400 for herself.

Mr. Malone draws his percentage because he lent her £500 for expenses. Her father, who is a successful pork butcher, draws his percentage because he advanced £300 of his own and £200 of the girl's own savings from her swimming prizes.

Is not this a fitting commentary on a society that judges nearly everything by £ s. d., and allows the views and the power of the money bugs to dry up nearly all the springs of healthy human activity?

The cynical, the pessimistic, the gloomy-minded, and the supporters of the present rotten foundation of society, observing these facts, are apt to jump to the conclusion that nothing good can or will be done to-day without having money and "position" held up as a prize to provide incentive for the courageous and the skilful. It would not be matter for wonder if this idea were true, when one considers the tremendous obstacles that confront those who choose to ignore, up to, and even beyond, the verge of starvation, the commercial side of what they do, and prefer rather to follow the calling they love, asking as recompense only joy in the work they do and appreciation from their fellows.

A careful examination of the facts, however, is rewarded by the gratifying information, so full of hope for the future, that the bulk of the important things done to-day, in every direction, for the benefit of humanity, are not done with the object of securing either place or pelf, and often foreshadow to the doer social loss, poverty and misery. Of such things are the great industrial dis-

coveries, the great works in literature and other forms of art, and the expeditions to the untrodden places of the earth.

There is one side to the problem that is apt to be missed by many well-meaning people. People of an imaginative and energetic temperament must find some outlet for their energies or perish. This fact is at the root of much of the activity that, on the surface, appears suicidal to the unobservant.

Apart from the fields of activity mentioned above, the different forms of sport provide

myriad illustrations for the readiness of men and women to undergo arduous training purely for pleasure, or for the approbation of their fellows. When the social organisation has been cleared of the cankerous influence of private ownership in the means of production, with the limitations such a state of affairs imposes upon human activity, everybody will be free to exert their capacities to the full in whatever way they like best, with the only condition that such activity shall not be to the hurt of the rest of the people.

GILMAC.

THE ONWARD MARCH OF CAPITALISM.

To show the degrading effect of capitalist production on the modern wage-worker, Paul Lafargue uses this comparison.

"Look at the noble savage whom the missionaries of trade and the traders of religion have not yet corrupted with Christianity, syphilis and the dogma of work, and then look at our miserable slaves of machines."

—*The Right to be Lazy* (p.10).

To justify this statement, we need only compare the general conditions of the workers to-day with the following description that Lewis Morgan gives of the American Indian:—

All the members of an Iroquois gens were personally free, and they were bound to defend each other's freedom; they were equal in privileges and in personal rights, the sachem and chiefs claiming no superiority; and they were a brotherhood bound together by the ties of kin. Liberty, equality, and fraternity, though never formulated, were cardinal principles of the gens. These facts are material, because the gens was the unit of a social and governmental system, the foundation upon which Indian society was organised. A structure composed of such units would of necessity bear the impress of their character, for as the unit so the compound. It serves to explain that sense of independence and personal dignity universally an attribute of Indian character. (Ancient Society, pp. 85-6.)

Such was the state of man in this form of society, before modern civilisation played its part. And the curse it has been to these people is evident from the following item of news that appeared in the "Daily News," 7/3/1927:—

The Red Indians, confined to reservations in various parts of the United States, even as near the east coast as New York State itself, are dying by thousands, abused and neglected.

Mr. Robert E. Callahan, a writer on western life, has just spent a year surveying the 22 principal Indian reservations. He declared that on some reservations he found the Indians kill-

ing their pet dogs and their horses to keep themselves alive.

And further, we are told that:—

Judges appointed by the agents have been known to throw Indians into gaol for resenting an agent's treatment of them. An Indian named Kill Thunder was chained by one of these men, who was judge, gaoler, and prosecutor all in one, for visiting a friend without the agent's permission.

There are estimated to be 340,000 Indians left in America. Mr. Callahan says 225,000 of them have been reduced to the most miserable conditions of existence, and that unless some drastic changes are made the Red Indians within a few years will be extinct.

So we see that the capitalist method of wiping out, what is to them, an odious comparison, between the Barbarian and the wage-slave, is to reduce the former to a state of poverty and subjection, parallel to that suffered by the latter.

Exploitation by the capitalist class, together with the evils that flow from it, spreads like a plague, and to escape from its vile influence is out of the question.

In drawing up the manifesto of the Communist Party (1847) Marx and Engels dealt with this point:

On page 10, they say:—

The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connexions everywhere.

And further, on the same page, we read:

It compels all nations on pain of extinction to adopt the bourgeoisie mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilisation into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image.

Events since this was written have demonstrated the truth of the assertions made.

The most recent example, on the one hand, is China, whose development has been accelerated through its exploitation by the Western Powers. And an effort is now being made by the property-owning class in China, to rid itself of that influence, and secure the full benefits from the exploitation of the workers of that country.

On the other hand, there is the American Indians, who, not having reached the preceding stage in historical development to capitalist society, is unable to adopt that form of production, and consequently must suffer the penalty of extinction.

A nation or class can only establish that form of society which has been made possible by conditions which have developed within the prevailing system. And the chief factor which determines the character of a society; and the direction or form which the new system will take, is the way in which the wealth of that society is produced, and the form of ownership or distribution.

The introduction of capitalism, necessitated, not only that the production of goods for sale should be developed, together with the merchant and his capital, but also the presence of a body of producers that could be profitably utilised as wage-workers.

The backward nature of the vast populations of Russia and China, accounts to a great extent for the slow development of these countries. And the fact that they are, in spite of this handicap, following in the direction of the more advanced countries, speaks volumes for the penetrating powers of the capitalist method of production. But had the social system of these countries been in a more primitive state, their fate would have been that of America and the Colonies, which were developed by the modern emigrant wage-worker. And the original inhabitants, who were not slaughtered by the invading force, pushed in the background, and used later as chattel slaves or exterminated in compounds, provided by the "benevolent" Christian capitalists, because they could not profitably use them in the modern method of production.

As the establishment of capitalism was made possible by conditions that developed in feudalism, so in turn have the conditions been developed in the present system that makes the next social change both possible and necessary.

The growth of social production within the present system, supplies the foundation of the society that is to take its place, and

makes the change to Socialism possible.

The private ownership by a non-producing section of the socially produced wealth implies on the other hand a property-less producing class, whose interest dictates the need for that change; a change that awaits the understanding by this class; that to secure the benefits their social productive powers justify, they must end the private ownership in the means of life, and establish a system of society in which the wealth that is socially produced, shall be socially owned.

And by taking advantage of the political conditions that have grown up with the system, they will secure control of the machinery of state, and with command of this force, accomplish the social change which their class interest dictates. E. L.

A RARE FRAGMENT.

"A British Labour delegation came to Moscow. It consisted of three well-known members of the British Labour Party and of the Trades Union Congress. They had come to show the solidarity of the British workers with the Russian Revolution. I was present when they received a deputation from the Moscow Council of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. These men who were members of all parties in the Soviet, began by asking what was the attitude of British Labour to the Russian Revolutionaries' proposal of peace without annexations or indemnities and with the right of self-determination for nationalities. . . . the British delegates were firm, 'only the complete military defeat and crushing of Germany for many years to come would bring peace in the world.'"

"But even if that were the best tactics to adopt for destroying Prussian militarism," . . . said one of the Russians, 'is that any reason why we should not renounce the old annexationist plans of the Tsar's late régime and publish the secret treaties? The Tsar made us fight for Constantinople, which is not Russian and never was.' One of the British delegates thereupon jovially burst out: 'If you don't want Constantinople, then, damn it, we'll take it!' I remember the long silence after this remark, then hand-shaking and the withdrawal of the deputation from the representatives of British 'Labour.' " (Italics ours.)

An extract from—"My Reminiscences of the Russian Revolution," by M. Philips Price, at that time Russian correspondent for the "Manchester Guardian."

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

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The Socialist Standard,

JUNE,



1927

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY
AND THE LABOUR PARTY.****A COMPARISON.**

We are often told by supporters of the Labour Party that we are out of touch with the workers. That we do not participate in or encourage them in their daily struggles on the industrial field, nor support them in their efforts to gain legislative reforms.

To test the truth of this, it is necessary to examine the nature and constitution of the two parties: The Socialist Party of Great Britain and the Labour Party. The first is composed of working men and women who have realised the slave position of their class, and are organising on carefully defined principles with a definite object clearly stated. The principles and objects are logically evolved from ascertained facts patent to everyone, but so clearly worded that they cannot be misunderstood. As it is a condition of membership that the worker shall understand and endorse the principles, every member is in a position to participate intelligently in a movement that is really democratic. In other words, the members control the activities of the party.

The Labour Party is the opposite of this in character and constitution. True, it is composed mainly of working-class men and women; but few of them understand how completely they are enslaved by the wages system; or the necessity for its abolition. Beyond the understood practice of electing leaders to Parliament, and the non-Socialist objects of nationalising industries, nothing is clearly defined. This lack of principles and socialist objective, permits a wide freedom of action to ambitious schemers for power. The result is confusion, not only in the minds of the rank and file, but also among the leaders themselves.

Every question that is dragged to the front in Parliament and Press is responsible for differences among the Labour leaders. Right and Left Wings, and sometimes a centre as well, take up different attitudes, neither of which is in accord with an analysis of the case from the working-class viewpoint.

This confusion, as can readily be seen, is due to the absence of any clearly-defined basis, outlining the position and objective of the organisation.

The lack of unity among the leaders, however, does not prevent them from lecturing the workers on the need for unity among themselves. The contradictory and useless reforms advocated from time to time by innumerable leaders, and would-be leaders, form the basis of Labour action—a foundation of shifting sands on which the workers are exhorted to erect and maintain a united organisation.

Contrast this confusion with the attitude of the Socialist Party. Questions that agitate the public are always analysed from the standpoint that the workers are a slave-class—that there can be no identity of interests between them and the class that owns the means of life and enslaves them. If the questions involve capitalist interests only, we refuse to take up sides, but always point out their unimportance for the worker. The clearly-defined position laid down in the Party's principles enables every member to analyse any question prominently before the public, or any reform advocated by politicians.

The Labour Party encourages the workers to struggle for reforms within the present system. The Socialist Party tells the workers that capitalism is the capitalists' own system, and if the latter want it to last, it is their business to patch it up. Obviously

they will endeavour to make working-class conditions more endurable in proportion as a genuine working-class party develops and threatens their system.

How far the leaders of the Labour Party are out of touch with the workers can easily be seen by a study of their activities in Parliament. Most of the debates in which they take part have no bearing on working-class conditions, and are not of the slightest interest to the workers. Parliament for the leaders is merely a hunting-ground for prominence and positions.

The pamphlets and periodicals of the Labour Party have never explained Socialism to the workers. "The New Leader," the official organ of the I.L.P., is a mixture of sentimentalism, hero-worship and quite orthodox comments on current capitalist politics. Its tone is of the intellectuals. Insignificant ideas magnified by ostentatious phraseology constitute one of its chief assets—its fantastic ideas of reform, and its ultra dignified philosophy on social questions carry no message which the average worker can understand; it would indeed be surprising if he could.

The current number of the "New Leader" (13/5/27), page 7, contains an article typical of many, in its use of high-sounding, but almost meaningless phrases. Statement number one is as follows:—

"Socialism is a dynamic force, too great to be confined in one mould of organisation, and too vital for us to see its ultimate effects."

How enlightening this must be to the worker who is trying to understand Socialism; but how puzzled the same reader will be when he reads a little lower:—

"Family endowment is fundamental Socialism, and without it I doubt whether any industrial order can produce a Socialist Commonwealth; but family endowment may take more forms than one."

But the reader who imagines that Socialism will end class struggles, will be more confused still when he reads:—

"Our trade unions must not be weaker in a commonwealth; they must be stronger and more dignified."

The same reader's confusion must end in despair when he reads the concluding paragraph:—

"I have crowded a big picture on a small canvas, and perhaps have raised more questions than can easily be answered; but I

am sure that we must look forward, not to any final form of social organisation, but to a progressive and developing social organism."

In other words, capitalism will continue, with occasional, but gentle modifications calculated not to disturb the ruling class or their agents.

In the same number of the "New Leader" is an article entitled "The Psychology of Socialism and Crime," in which the following passage occurs:—

"Millions in our days suffer from the sense of inferiority. They are largely unconscious of it because the sense of inferiority is so painful that, whenever it is excited, the mind instantly imagines some kind of superiority, in order to compensate for it. That hides it from the sufferer himself: and to others also it often gives the opposite impression, as it puts him all the more upon his dignity. In fact, he is likely to appear uppish and conceited, precisely because his soul is falling to pieces with diffidence, and the despair of ever being anyone's equal."

By the manner in which the I.L.P. leaders endeavour to hide the poverty of their ideas under pompous phraseology, they must be badly afflicted with the "inferiority complex."

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"INFLATION" ONCE MORE.

To the Editor,
SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Dear Sir,

It was not my intention to again encroach on your space, but the last few lines of your reply to my letter in May issue of "S.S." invites, with your kind permission, a further contribution from me.

You introduce an innuendo which is uncalled for by implying that those who differ from you as to whether the currency of this country was inflated or not from 1914 to 1925 are "misleaders of the workers."

You admit the possibility of credit-inflation, but object apparently to the term currency-inflation. On that point I am in agreement with you, and consider it would add to clarity if temporary movements of the price-level were studied from the angle of credit manipulation, and currency, as an effect, relegated to its rightful subordinate position.

Is it not, however, rather a play with words, and a waste of time, to differ greatly from those who insist on using that term, especially when we consider the mass of material available to justify their point of view?

For instance, credit necessitates a legal-tender currency backing, and 15 per cent. cash, to liabilities, is generally considered more than ample. When war broke out, metal was replaced by paper as legal tender. Bank obligations could now be met in currency notes to any amount, and so accommodating was the British Treasury in this respect, that provision was made for the supply of legal tender currency straight from the printing press to the banks up to 20 per cent. of their total liabilities. Currency notes could be loaned to banks at the bank rate of interest, or alternatively bought outright by the transfer of securities, Treasury Bills, etc. The method by which Treasury Bills were acquired by the banks, and which in turn enabled them so easily to become possessed of legal tender on which ultimately a mountain of credit was based, needs no labouring here.

Consequently, it is maintained, the Government's action in so freely granting legal tender facilities invited and made possible credit inflation.

Hence, currency inflation was the primary cause of high prices.

That undue inflation of credit was responsible, to an extent, for the high prices that obtained during the war period, and after, goes without saying.

The Cunliffe Committee admitted inflation, and demonstrated how it had been brought about.

The heavy buying of gold on the open market and its exportation, mainly on American account, may have been a factor in forcing it to a premium, i.e., appreciation of the metal may have been unaccompanied by a corresponding depreciation of the paper currency.

Unfortunately for those who hold to that point of view, too insistently, the premium persisted right up to the return to the gold standard in 1925; and as late as 1922 it still required nearly £1 10s. in currency notes to purchase the gold contained in one sovereign. If that was not inflation, then, words have no meaning.

That inflation was not the sole reason for the high price-level previous to the reversion to the gold standard, as compared with the pre-war period, is made clear by the fact that now, with no suspicion of inflation, prices still remain considerably above the 1914 level.

That is due to one thing, and one thing only: a fall in the value of gold, and not as stated by many of the Labour Party, to the conscious action of trusts and combines.

Your stricture on my statement re "newly mined gold," warrants more attention than it is possible to give it on this occasion. Suffice to say, that the axioms "socially necessary" and "cost of re-production," have for me a significance, and one feels that they should be treated as something more than mere empty phrases to conjure with.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

WILLIAM NICHOLLS.

OUR REPLY TO MR. NICHOLLS.

Despite all his previous admissions and evasions, Mr. Nicholls still struggles to maintain his lost cause of "Inflation." In the present letter he stresses two points.

One is that our charge against the Labour Party, the Plebs League, Bernard Shaw, etc., of being misleaders of the working-class when they supported the lie that high prices were due to "inflation of the currency," is "uncalled for." The only defence of their position Mr. Nicholls can

"PSYCHIC SCIENCE."

95a North View Road, N.8.

You have not accurately read my letter which you print in the May "S.S." I wrote that Flammarion had not said that the claims of Spiritists are unfounded. Will you quote a passage in which he does say such claims are unfounded. What you allege to be Flammarion's position, would not—even if true, which it is not—controvert my guarded statement. But I think you are confusing Flammarion with Professor Richet, because Flammarion says:—

The occurrences cited prove that there is no death. . . . These phenomena convince us also that the soul manifests itself after death. ("After Death," by Camille Flammarion.)

With regard to "Great Men," I would point out that, in all subjects, we rely on specialists, experts and authorities. For example, the name of the great Marx appears on nearly every page of the "S.S."

Your remark to the effect that children are better acquainted with inductive logic than Sir William Crookes and Sir Oliver Lodge is certainly original!!! GEO. T. FOSTER.

OUR REPLY TO MR. FOSTER.

Mr. Foster's position is that of a man who, having stepped into a bog, finds himself sinking further in the mud at each attempt to struggle out.

The statement in his first letter was a loose general one—namely, that Flammarion, etc., "do not say that the claims of spiritualists are baseless, but rather the contrary."

What are the claims of spiritualists?

As Mr. Foster has not "guarded" his statement by any limitation or qualification, the only meaning left is "all the claims of spiritualists." That Mr. Foster wished the reader to understand his statement in this sense is shown by his linking Flammarion's name with Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Crookes and Sir William Barrett—all avowed spiritualists. That Flammarion believes in life after death does not make him a spiritualist. Millions of people who hold this belief are bitter opponents of spiritists and spiritism.

Flammarion is not a spiritist. He rejects many of their claims, particularly in reference to mediums. Numerous quotations could be given to prove this, but the following will establish our point:—

But all mediums, men and women, have to be watched. During a period of more than forty

bring forward is to ask us to consider "the mass of material available to justify their point of view." Out of this "mass of material," wherever it may be, Mr. Nicholls takes one piece—the introduction of the currency note—and elaborates on the technical points connected with this introduction. This forms his second point. Yet he has only to turn to the December, 1926, issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD, which was the starting point of his controversy, to find his whole elaborate case and his deduction—"Hence, currency inflation was the primary cause of high prices"—completely smashed by one simple fact. We will quote this fact from page 63 of our December issue:—

"War was declared on Germany by Great Britain on Sunday night in the fateful August of 1914. On Monday morning people rushed to buy up supplies and prices began to rise at once, before any inflation could take place. As a matter of fact the new currency notes were not issued till some little time after. Prices continued to rise and more currency was, therefore, required to circulate the goods. All through the war the rises in prices preceded the increases in currency. In fact, as shown by the Cunliffe Committee, the total increase in prices was greater than the total increase in currency. These facts prove beyond dispute that no 'inflation' of the currency had taken place."

It is a pity that as, according to Mr. Nicholls, the Cunliffe Committee had "demonstrated" how the inflation had been brought about, he did not quote this "demonstration." It would certainly be interesting to see how they tried to do it.

That the fall in the value of gold is not the "only" thing that maintains high prices has been shown in certain investigations and reports; a glaring instance being that of the Light Castings Trust, who deliberately raised prices afresh when the subsidy was given to builders of working-class houses.

Unless the "new-mined gold" has been produced by some new method, or discovery, that materially lowers the value of that gold, the existing available gold will, obviously, be taken into account with it.

Ed., Com.

NEW PUBLICATIONS FUND.

Contributions to this fund are earnestly invited to assist us with the expense of publishing more literature.

years I believe that I have received at my home nearly all of them, men and women of divers nationalities and from every quarter of the globe. One may lay it down as a principle that all professional mediums cheat. But they do not always cheat; and they possess real, undeniable, psychic powers.

Their case is nearly that of the hysterical folk under observation at the Salpêtrière or elsewhere. I have seen some of them outwit with their profound craft not only Dr. Charcot, but especially Dr. Luys, and all the physicians who make a study of their case. (Mysterious Psychic Forces, pp. 3 and 4.)

Thus, according to Flammarion, these mediums are "nearly" lunatics!

Another example can be taken from the book Mr. Foster quotes. After describing the type of conversation purported to be given by spirits at séances, and gently jeering at the spiritists who believe this sort of thing, he says:—

If this is what is called being a spiritist we can say we are not spiritists. (After Death, p. 344.)

As an example of the sloppiness of Mr. Foster's methods, we may point out that he does not give the page from which he has taken the quotation from "After Death." The reader who is not acquainted with this work will naturally think that as the quotation is inside one set of quotation marks, it all comes from one paragraph. This is not so. The first phrase, from which a clause has been omitted, is taken from page 346, while the second phrase is taken from page 348.

A child can see that his reference to "specialists, experts and authorities" does not touch our exposure of the emptiness of the case of those who rely on the names of "Great Men" to take the place of evidence. As pointed out in our previous reply, it is a matter of evidence—not names. "Specialists, experts and authorities" are those who have made discoveries in, or special studies of, the subject in which they are "expert." The real "experts" on mediums, and séances are the first-class conjurers, like Maskelyne and Devant, and their views are well known. Neither Lodge, Crookes, Barrett, nor Flammarion, are even amateurs at conjuring, and their words on these matters are worth no more, if as much as, the ordinary man in the street.

The statement in Mr. Foster's last paragraph is "certainly original." So "original" in fact, that it has never appeared in the SOCIALIST STANDARD before, either from myself or anybody else. J. F.

AN URGENT APPEAL.

The Party is in urgent need of money. Being dependent entirely on the small amounts which our members and sympathisers can afford to contribute, we have always had a struggle to keep our organisation intact and carry on our propaganda. For years we were never out of debt, and this in spite of the fact that, with the exception of printing and a few similar items which had to be paid for, we depended on the willing and unpaid services of our members, who acted as speakers, writers and workers in the branches and at head office. We are not disturbed because we have no accumulated funds. We do not wish to save money. Any that comes our way is immediately spent on printing literature and selling it at prices sometimes below cost, and always within the reach of even the poorest worker. For various reasons our financial difficulties have become acute, and we are compelled to make a special appeal for donations. The position is that we owe our printer about £100, and it is essential that this hampering debt be discharged once. The position has arisen largely owing to the strikes of last year. Heavy expenses and fines had to be paid on behalf of members prosecuted under the Emergency Powers Act. Fewer propaganda meetings could be held, so that sales of literature and collections both fell off, and we have had to face the loss of a considerable and dependable income formerly derived from meetings in the London parks. Under new regulations, collections and literature selling are both permanently prohibited. These difficulties can be met and are being met, but it takes a long while to develop new street corner propaganda stations, and in the meantime we are compelled to ask you to dip into your pockets once more.

And apart from these unexpected drains on our income, we are ambitious. During 1926 we made really encouraging progress in membership, and a sustained effort during the summer months would give us half-a-dozen new branches in London. We are in touch with comrades in numerous centres in the Colonies and the U.S.A., and are hopeful that within a year or two the efforts which are now being made there will lead to the formation of vigorous bodies propagating principles in line with our own. We have at last got a strong foothold in Vienna. We want to be able to put full-time

organisers into the field to develop our organisation in the provinces; we want new pamphlets. There is no limit to what we want, but lack of money very effectively delays the carrying out of many promising schemes of development. You can help us financially by pushing the sales of the SOCIALIST STANDARD, and our pamphlets, but those who can afford to do so are also urged to make a special effort to send along a large or small donation, and to send it quickly.

AN APPEAL TO MANCHESTER READERS.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain exists as a result of the war between the classes—the antagonism of interests between the class of wage-workers and the class of property-owning employers. Its work, at present, lies in its efforts to arouse the wage-earners to a conscious recognition of their class slavery. The need for such a party is felt when one realises the amazing lack of class consciousness existing amongst the working-class.

To-day, the workers give their support to capitalism because they are saturated, quite unconsciously, in the majority of cases, with the ideas of the ruling class. They oppose the Socialist philosophy because they do not understand it. Not understanding it, they do not desire it. These capitalist ideas amongst wage-workers have to be fought, and their opposition to Socialism has to be removed, before we can organise effectively for the abolition of the capitalist system.

The work of spreading Socialist knowledge—and we are the only party that is doing this work—is a big job, and we are in need of many more members to help along this campaign. The larger the organisation, the more widely known can we make our object and principles.

To all Manchester friends and sympathisers, we make a special appeal and ask "Why not join us now?" We want your support, not only as readers of the SOCIALIST STANDARD, but as members of the organisation.

The Manchester Branch has recently been re-organised, but at present is handicapped by a small membership. We are ambitious and restless. We want to grow and forge ahead, and as quickly as possible. We want

to become known by the extent of our activities. We want to send up the Manchester sales of the "S.S." We want to hold many indoor and outdoor meetings, and make the Party's name and activities a mark of fear amongst those anti-working class organisations, the Conservative, Liberal and so-called Labour parties.

All this can be realised if all our Manchester sympathisers will join up, and help us in the fight against working-class political ignorance and apathy, and for the spreading of Socialist knowledge amongst the wage-earners.

Come then, all you unattached Manchester and district sympathisers. The Branch needs you. Don't put off the good intention until someone else has made up their mind to join. Set the example. Join now and help towards making the world fit for workers to live in. Don't merely keep on wishing that the workers were more alive to their wage-slavery status. Come in and help the Party towards making them Socialists.

Socialism is the only hope for the working-class—all else is illusion. But Socialism will only come when a majority of wage-workers understand it and desire it. That time can be hastened or retarded by YOUR joining, or remaining apart from, the only party worthy of working-class support.

Class-consciousness is the first essential. Organisation to help in furthering it is the next. Here's the organisation. Come in and join us now.

BRCH. SEC.

KNOWLEDGE.

The following Books can be obtained from Head Office:—

- Anarchism and Socialism.** Plechanoff. 3/6, paper 1/2.
- Civil War in France.** Marx 2/9.
- Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844.** Engels. 5/-
- Critique of Political Economy.** Marx. 6/6.
- 18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon.** Marx. 3/6.
- Evolution of Property.** Lafargue. 3/6, limp 1/6.
- Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.** Engels. 3/6.
- Poverty of Philosophy.** Marx. 6/6.
- Revolution and Counter-Revolution.** Marx. 3/6, limp 1/6.
- Social and Philosophical Studies.** Lafargue. 3/6.
- Socialism: Utopian and Scientific.** Engels. 3/6, limp 1/6. *Postage extra.*

DOES CAPITALISM REWARD INVENTIVE GENIUS?

The recent celebrations held in Lancashire to commemorate the memory of Samuel Crompton, a Bolton weaver and inventor, who died 100 years ago, call to mind a question often asked of the Socialist. How about the inventor under Socialism?

Ironical as it may seem, it is such inquiry that throws a lurid light upon the treatment that Capitalism has meted out to genius and ability. When this is understood, the position of all under Socialism will present no difficulty. We do not claim that exceptional ability can exist apart from the social conditions which give it birth. We propose to show that it is those who can exploit such ability to-day who reap the reward which the labour of others makes possible. Without the discoveries in the remote past of such now apparently simple things as the wheel, the lever, the ratchet, all the machinery of to-day would be unthinkable. Without the skill and dexterity of the workers, past and present, all the inventive genius ever born would have remained sterile. The cotton industry of to-day is one to which a number of fundamental inventions have been applied during the last century. Their application, with its operatives, has increased its productivity far beyond the effective demands of the world's markets, but under the present system these operatives live in poverty and suffer years of short-time working through their very productivity. What insanity! And what of those who did so much to make such output possible. One of these was John Kay, inventor of the "Fly Shuttle," one of the most important inventions made toward the improvement of the loom. He was a man of whom it was said he invented "everything." But his ideas were shamelessly stolen, and he died in poverty and obscurity somewhere in France. Another, James Hargreaves, saw a spinning wheel overturned which caused him to reflect upon certain improvements. He invented a machine as a result of which 20 to 30 spindles could be attended by one person. He died in Nottingham Workhouse. Richard Arkwright invented the water-frame. He appears to be one of the few who gained financial reward, yet, strange he is one about whom there are doubts as to his originality. He was assisted by Kay, who declared "the water-frame was no device of Arkwright's," but of another obscure individual. Whether this was true or not he, like others, had to contest his patent rights, and had at one

time as many as nine law-suits going. Samuel Crompton invented the "mule," a combination of Hargreave's spinning jenny and Arkwright's water-frame, which, with Watts' steam-engine revolutionised the cotton industry. He was a man of gentle and sensitive nature, made a violin, taught himself to play, and earned eighteen-pence a night in a Bolton theatre while working in his spare time on his invention. His machine was such that any mechanic who saw its finished condition could carry away its leading features; crowds gathered round his house, and he was often afraid to go out lest it was stolen. A few months, he says,

Reduced me to the cruel necessity of destroying my machine altogether, or giving it up to the public. To destroy it I could not think of, to give up that for which I had laboured so long was cruel. I had no patent, nor the means of purchasing one. In preference to destroying it I gave it to the public. (National Dictionary of Biographies, Vol. XIII.)

For using his invention, 80 firms and independent manufacturers gave him a document possessing no legal validity, in which they agreed to pay him certain sums. As a result, he received the handsome reward of £67. Sir Robert Peel offered him a partnership, but he declined. Like so many of his type, he possessed little business acumen. Making fortunes possible for others, he reaped little or no pecuniary reward himself, and died in poverty, embittered with his experiences. A like fate has awaited in the past composers, artists, scientists, poets, writers, public performers, etc. It is the Capitalist reward and fitting tribute to a rotten system. Mankind will ever crave to approbation of his fellow-man. When, with the coming of Socialism, security and a full life is made possible for all, those who show exceptional ability will not need to give of their talent to serve the profit of the idle few, but will add to the comfort of the whole race—whose best interests will be identical with their own. MAC.

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THE BUDGET, TAXES AND PRICES.

In the April "Socialist Standard," we showed briefly that the wages the Workers receive represent only the sum total of the prices of the things required to reproduce them. They cannot, because of that reason, contribute toward the growing expenditure of Capitalist bureaucracy. Though the Press always tells the worker that "he pays," that is to conceal the truth that the great bulk of their product forms the subsequent wealth of their masters. The introduction of the Budget provided an opportunity to unearth this mouldy illusion. This is how it reads:—

The broad truth remains that taxes on commodities tend as by a law of nature to be passed on to the consumers. (*Daily Chronicle*, 18/4/27.)

Even upon the basis of their own reasoning, this would not be much consolation to our masters, who, by a Capitalist law of surplus value, consume nine-tenths of labour's product. The statement is really made to hide this ugly fact by the veiled inference that the Workers loom large as consumers. The Budget, in money terms, has risen from 194 million in 1914 to 825 million in the present year, and if this expenditure can be shifted on to other shoulders by the wealth-owners, why the howls that went up from the "business" men of the day? In the "Westminster Gazette," 5/4/27, bold headlines informed us that "Industry warns the Chancellor," and of "Trade Leaders' anger." Sir Hugh Bell, director (on paper) of a dozen large concerns, bemoaned that:

"Really the country is bankrupt. It will not mend until public expenditure is lowered, taxes reduced, and the costs of industry diminished"—Ibid.

What becomes now of passing on taxes "as by a law of nature"? But enough, this tripe is only for the workers. In "Business Organisation" (April), is an article by H. A. Silverman, B.A., addressed to "those who maintain high income-tax is prejudicial to the interests of industry and trade." Those interested in profits get, of course, the facts, though it seems absurd to doubt that they don't already know them. For those who are only the human raw material in producing those profits any old bunkum will do. Compare this with the statement quoted from the "Chronicle":

... to increase the price is to risk a serious contraction of the market. ... Where competition prevails the seller will hesitate to add the

equivalent of the tax to his prices lest his rivals should continue to charge the old price and so capture the market.—Ibid.

Though prices of commodities are determined at the time of sale by supply and demand, they are ultimately governed by their value, and it is this value that the up-to-date Capitalist is always trying to reduce in order to lower his prices and thus increase his market. The falsity of the raising prices argument is often a deadly weapon used against the workers when endeavouring to secure wage increases in order to maintain their standard of living. It is argued that such increases will be passed on to them as consumers. A little reflection will show that argument false, for why should the sellers of commodities wait upon such increases? Were they previously taking a lower price than they could have charged? The advice given to the traders supports our contention, they tell them,

and this is the crux of the matter, that they are, as a rule, already charging the highest prices consistent with maximum profits. ... The case of the "benevolent Monopolist" who has been deliberately and consciously charging less than his strict financial interests would permit, but under the stress of income tax is compelled to raise his prices, is so rare that we may disregard the effects on the general position.—Ibid.

All the ups and downs of prices matter little to the workers in the long run. To understand the cause of poverty they must realise that it is as producers and not consumers that they are kept poor. It is to production that they must look if they would understand how the great thieving trick is done. MAC.

NEW PAMPHLET.

We are proposing to publish a new pamphlet, but we cannot do so until we have the money. If we print 20,000 copies the cost will be in the neighbourhood of £100. We ask, therefore, for donations. As soon as we get sufficient to justify giving the order to our printer we shall be pleased to proceed.

S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS LONDON DISTRICT.

- Sundays:** Finsbury Park, 6 p.m.
Clapham Common, 6 p.m.
Victoria Park, 4 p.m.
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.
Paddington, Prince of Wales, 11.30 a.m.
- Mondays:** Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.
- Wednesdays:** Hackney, Paragon Rd. and Mare St. 8 p.m.
Leyton, James Lane, High Road, 8 p.m.
- Fridays:** Battersea, Masons Arms, 8 p.m.
Clerkenwell, Almeida St., Upper St., N., 8 p.m.
West Ham, Water Lane 8 p.m.

BRANCH DIRECTORY.

BATTERSEA.—Sec., 2, Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Rd. Discussion second Thurs. in month.

BECONTREE.—Branch meets Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at Ashton Hall, High Road, Chadwell Heath, Essex. Sec., S. Cash, 32, Greenway. Public invited.

BETHNAL GREEN. Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m., at 2, Co-operative Buildings, 361, Bethnal Green Rd., E.2. Sec., D. Jacobs, at above address.

BIRMINGHAM.—Sec. E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st & 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.

CENTRAL.—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

CLERKENWELL.—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Sec., at above address.

EAST LONDON.—Sec., A. Jacobs, 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.

EDINBURGH.—Sec., D. L. Lamond, 15, Barclay Place, Edinburgh.

GLASGOW.—Sec., J. Higgins, 816, Rutherglen-rd., Oatlands, Glasgow.

HACKNEY.—Branch meets Saturdays, 7 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare Street, Hackney. Discussions after Branch Business. Sec. at above address.

HANLEY.—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock St., Hanley, Staffs.

HULL.—Branch meetings, Tuesday, at 8 p.m., at the Trade and Labour Club (Jarratt Street entrance). Discussion after meeting. All readers in Hull requested to attend. Sec., G. Vinecrad, 40, Brook Street, Hull.

ISLINGTON.—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Sec., N. A. Bishop, 39, Poyning-rd., N.19.

LEYTON.—Sec., A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.

MANCHESTER.—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park Street, Salford, Manchester.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 7.45 p.m. at 114, Duke St., Stretford Road.

PADDINGTON.—Branch meets Fridays at 7 p.m., at Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn Lane. Address letters to Secretary at above address.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.—Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

TOOTING.—Sec., A. Yeomans, 15, University-rd., Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m.

TOTTENHAM.—Secretary 22, Dunloe-ave., N.15. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

WALTHAMSTOW.—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

WATFORD.—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

WEST HAM.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

WOOD GREEN. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

MARXISM OR COMMUNISM.

"Communism," by Harold J. Laski. Home University Press.

Professor Laski's book is one of the most informative and interesting of the dozens of interpretations and criticisms of Marx which have appeared since the Russian upheaval. If, in addition to some minor inaccuracies, the book has one or two important failings, these are not due to the absence of ordinary care or to the class bias and lack of imagination which have marred so many of the works of scholastic critics. Professor Laski has succeeded in compressing a great deal of matter into small space, and has admirably summarised certain aspects of his subject. In a brief historical introduction, he covers adequately the development of Socialist theory, and in the other four chapters he deals with the Materialist interpretation of History, Marxian Economics, the Communist Theory of the State and the Strategy of Communism. Lastly, there is a brief statement of Professor Laski's own conclusions. While the approach to the subject is critical, the writer does not make the common mistake of imputing to Marx or to the Communists "bad" motives (using bad in the popular sense of a departure from conventional capitalist standards).

He does not make the easy assumption that Bolshevik theories are unsound merely because the Bolsheviks repudiate capitalist standards of conduct, fight under strange flags and use unorthodox weapons. He is more than fair, he is generous to his opponents, but it is this very generosity which leads him astray. First he assumes that Bolshevik theory and the Marxian philosophy are identical. This is not entirely true and it is unfair to both Marx and to Lenin.

On the one hand it is the boast of many

Communists that his practical revolutionary experience enabled Lenin to improve upon the teachings of Marx; and on the other hand, it is misleading to hold Marx responsible for some of the vagaries of Communist thought and action. Professor Laski's second and most serious failing is one which perhaps he copied from Professor A. D. Lindsay, who recently wrote a book entitled "Karl Marx's Capital."

In his preface, Mr. Laski acknowledges his debt to Professor Lindsay in the writing of the chapter dealing with Marxian Economics. On page 61 of Lindsay's book we read:—

The Labour theory of value is misleading. It is primarily interested in what a man ought to get in reward for his labour.

On page 95 of the present work, Professor Laski, in explaining the Labour theory, writes:—

Thus we can measure the amount of "labour-power" in each man's effort, and so determine scientifically how he ought to be paid.

And on page 116 he says:

It is clear, then, that at the root of Marx's view there lies an ethical test of value. Commodities for him . . . have also an inherent value which is what they would obtain in exchange where society was properly organised.

Professor Laski apparently picked this up from Professor Lindsay. From what source Professor Lindsay obtained it I do not know, but it is a fantasy so far removed from the Marxian method and purpose that it is impossible for one who sees Marx through these spectacles to grasp his theoretical system as a whole. Marx was not concerned with Utopian societies or with ethical values as a basis for economic theories. His economic doctrines sought to do no more than explain what exists within the capitalist sys-

tem. For Marx there is no amount that the worker *ought* to receive, nor was the non-receipt of the full value produced, ever offered as a justification for restitution or for the struggle to rebuild society. Exploitation to the Marxist is not something "wrong," and therefore to be condemned. Exploitation in various forms has been the necessary basis of different social systems. The need for it is passing, and only that fact calls for and justifies our efforts to establish Socialism. Marx's economic theories must be judged on their merits, not as contributions to an ideal society of the future. Professor Laski does seriously attempt this, but fails through missing the precise meaning attached to the terms Marx uses. This is his answer to Marx:—

It is clear that if we say (1) that the value of a commodity depends upon the amount of socially necessary labour-time it embodies, (2) that this amount is discovered in the process of exchange, and (3) that the exchange rate is fixed by the value of the commodity, we are really saying that value depends upon value. (Page 96.)

Professor Laski has not distinguished here between "price" and "value." His statement (1) is correct, (2) is not correct, does not link (1) and (3) together, and therefore does not warrant the conclusion drawn. The amount of labour-time socially necessary is fixed by the conditions of production themselves. What happens in the process of exchange is that value expresses itself in its price form — price fluctuating about value with the varying conditions of the market. Statement (3) is correct only if it means that price is ultimately dependent upon value, the point about which it oscillates. If by "exchange rate" in (3) Professor Laski does not mean market price, then he must mean "value." Then (3) would read "the value is the value," which is true but not useful as a step towards drawing a further conclusion.

The second main defect is the assumption that the Bolsheviks are orthodox Marxians. To show the lack of justification for this we need take only one illustration: the Commune of 1871. Professor Laski says (38): "The lesson of the Commune is the need for dictatorship. The capitalist class must be repressed." But neither Lenin nor Professor Laski shows that this is the lesson which Marx drew from the Commune, and it is certainly not the method adopted by the Communards themselves. Lissagary (History of the Commune, p. 172) makes it

quite clear that there were no repressive measures, no dictatorship, on the Russian model in Paris then.

Sunday the 26th (March, 1871) was a day of joy and sunshine. Paris breathed again, happy like one just escaped from death or great peril. At Versailles the streets looked gloomy, gendarmes occupied the station, brutally demanded passports, confiscated all the journals of Paris, and at the slightest expression of sympathy for the town arrested you. At Paris everybody could enter freely. The streets swarmed with people, the cafés were noisy; the same lad cried out the Paris Journal and the Commune; the attacks against the Hotel de Ville, the protestations of a few malcontents, were posted on the walls by the side of the placards of the Central Committee. The people were without anger because without fear. The voting paper had replaced the Chassepot.

Professor Laski lightly dismisses the defence of democracy put forward by Kautsky in the controversy with Lenin, but Kautsky's arguments in "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat" have still to be answered by the Bolsheviks. We are not defenders of Kautsky's actions, either since or during the war (we had repudiated his claim to speak for Socialism before 1914, while Lenin, Trotsky and others were still worshipping Kautsky's reputation and his past) but we claim that the Bolsheviks have failed to prove him wrong when he says that a minority cannot impose a new social system from above on a hostile or apathetic majority satisfied with and used to a more backward economic organisation. In this, Kautsky expresses the Marxian viewpoint, as against the "Blanquism" of the Russians. (For a full discussion of this question, see "S.S.," July, October and November, 1920, and October, 1921.)

Professor Laski misunderstands the Marxian doctrine of the increasing exploitation of the workers. Marx did not assume and build his theories upon the inevitability of increased poverty. The change he had in mind was the worsening position of the workers relative to the wealth and power of the capitalist class. What he argued was that the productivity of the workers' increases more rapidly than their real wages.

Thus, in "Capital" (Vol. 1, p. 631), he said:—

They can extend the circle of their enjoyments; . . . and can lay by small reserve funds of money. But just as little as better clothing, food, and treatment, and a larger peculium, do away with the exploitation of the slave, so little do they set aside that of the wage-worker.

On page 661 he elaborated the point that the workers' position gets worse, even although his real wages may not fall, but actually rise.

I do not, however, think that Professor Laski would care to contend that in fact the workers in this country have maintained during 30 years the standard of living of 1897.

He offers one or two of the stock criticisms of the Materialist Conception of History. It will not, he says (p. 79), explain "the loyalty of Catholic working-men to their religion."

It does explain even this. Working-men are loyal to the Catholic religion while that religion continues to play a vital part in a social system which has need for religion. And when the economic development forces to the front the conflicting interests of classes, while at the same time the mechanical processes of industry thrust religious modes of thought into the background, working-men cease to be loyal to the Catholic religion. Can any other theory of history satisfactorily explain this? The Materialist Conception does not rule out or minimise the powerful hold of tradition on men's minds, but it shows how and why material forces will in time undermine all traditions. For an account of the rapidly waning hold of Catholicism in Germany over the minds of the Catholic trade unionists, readers are referred to the report of an enquiry recently conducted by the Catholic Trade Union Federation ("S.S.," February, 1927).

No one who reads the book can fail to be interested in the many issues which Professor Laski raises, but it is impossible even to mention here all the controversial points. It is, however, necessary to remind readers that the book necessarily contains many interpretations of events, theories and programmes which are likely to be questioned from one angle or another. It is not an authoritative statement either of Communist policy or of Marxian theory. On the first ground, the Communists question it, as we must on the second. This is, as I have said, necessarily so. Professor Laski is fair, and has no axe to grind, but no man can hope to state fully and with proper discrimination the views of an opponent. It is greatly to Professor Laski's credit that, in addition to writing an interesting and thought-provoking book, he has so nearly fulfilled that impossible task.

H.

THE "PLEBS" ON CHINA.

In the June "Plebs," a writer signing himself "Zed," tries to explain the meaning of the Chinese Nationalist movement for the benefit of the Marxists who can see in it "no more than in the various bourgeois nationalist movements of the past." As we are Marxists who can see in capitalist nationalist movements nothing but capitalist nationalism (except, maybe, nationalised capitalism) possibly "Zed" is speaking of and to us. When, however, he says that the "defection of Chiang-kai-Shek" must seem to these Marxists "an inexplicable surprise," we can assure him that the boot is on the other foot. The people who were most surprised—apart from the Chinese workers whose heads Chiang-kai-Shek cut off when he had no further use for their propaganda activities, were precisely those who urged the workers to support the Chinese Nationalist Movement and its leaders. As was pointed out in our May issue, almost at the moment when Chiang was openly suppressing the trade unions, the Labour Research Department was explaining why the workers could go on supporting him with confidence in his aims and integrity. It is not a personal question, but one of class interests, as "Zed" correctly remarks, but it is emphatically not correct that the Chinese Nationalist Movement is "a bloc united by a common interest . . . against Imperialism." "Zed" is led astray by his unquestioning acceptance of the view that peasants and workers can be lumped together as one class. This is as unsound as his further assumption that these two classes and the Chinese capitalists have a common interest in resisting foreign capitalism. True, peasants and workers are both, in their different ways, exploited, but the farmers' desire for private ownership of the land free from punitive taxation, and their desire for good marketing facilities for their products, do not make them allies for the workers, either in the struggle for higher wages or for the abolition of capitalism. In the fight for and against private property they are on opposite sides.

"Zed" does not offer one scrap of evidence that the Chinese workers have an interest in fighting foreign capitalist governments. The interests served in China by the Nationalist Movement are those of the Chinese capitalists and peasants, not those of the Chinese workers. We therefore ex-

pected from the first that the leaders of that movement would never permit their own workers to get out of hand, and that any danger to capitalist interests from that quarters would be ruthlessly suppressed. Nor are we surprised to learn that Chang, the Northern anti-Nationalist dictator, who represents another section of the exploiters, contemplates hoisting the flag of nationalism to cover the too blatant class interests he represents. It is only the too-trustful "Zed" and the Chinese dupes of this anti-working-class theory who are surprised at what takes place.

"Zed" goes on to consider why, in such movements, the capitalist nationalists ultimately ally themselves—on terms—with their "Imperialist enemies." It is because we recognise that this is inevitable that we urge the workers everywhere to oppose their own capitalist class from the outset and build up their own independent organisations. If this were done, so soon as the organisations of the workers became anything of a power, the employers would come to terms with foreign capitalists, and the confusion of a nationalist struggle, with its obscuring effect on the class issues, would be avoided. To justify the alternative policy "Zed" needs to offer some substantial evidence that the workers have ever gained by supporting the employing class in a struggle with foreign capitalists. In which of the European nations between 1914 and 1918 did defence of the "fatherland" bring gains to the working-class movement.

What were the concessions won from capitalist governments by the fraudulent "National Socialist Parties" which littered Europe in those days, whether our own Labour Party, that in Germany or those in the new Polish, Czecho-Slovak and other republics?

Let "Zed" tell us what the Indian, Egyptian and Irish workers have secured by pursuing the will o' the wisp of nationalism. In truth, of course, none of these movements ever pretended to aim at working-class emancipation. The Kuomintang, like Sinn Fein, has purely propertied-class aims. In "Lansbury's Labour Weekly" (another journal urging support of what it is pleased to call "Socialist-nationalism") Feng-Yuhsiang, Commander-in-Chief of the Chinese Revolutionary Army, sets out "Our Programme (June 4th). It contains not the slightest reference to any working-class problem. It is "revolutionary" enough:

it involves, among other things, the complete evacuation of all foreign troops, but "Zed" must surely appreciate the fact that revolutions are not the monopoly of the working-class, a change over from feudal land tenure to peasant proprietorship in China is a revolutionary change, but it is not one which will aid the workers.

May we advise "Zed" to read in the same issue of the "Plebs" an article on Ireland. In it A. Ellis writes as follows:—

Republican capitalism once it had become a partner with European capitalism sets about to share the exploitation of the Irish workers. Their reactionary measures have strengthened the hands of the reactionaries in the North, providing additional material for the division of the workers as Loyalists, Republicans, Nationalists, Catholic and Protestant, to the confusion of the real issue of capital versus Labour.

The Irish workers have gained *nothing* by helping the Republican Movement. There are yet hardly the beginnings of a genuine working-class movement in Ireland. The war for independence has only embittered the relations between the Irish workers, and workers outside the Free State, by stressing racial and religious divisions, and by strengthening the illusion of a common bond between the classes in the Free State. "Zed" wants us to persuade the Chinese workers to copy this fatal example.

In passing, it is amusing to notice that, in exchange for the spilling of much blood, the Irish have not even won the sentimental satisfaction of having done for ever with the hated British troops. Their Minister for External Affairs recently declared in the Dail that the Free State troops "would co-operate in resisting a general attack" on Great Britain, and Ireland, and that "it is practically inconceivable that our army would be opposed to the British Army." ("New Statesman," February 19th).

In the last war the Irish effectively resisted the application of conscription in that country. Having fought voluntarily for "freedom," they have great hopes next time of enjoying the compulsory privilege of being enrolled with their British fellow-dupes. What a victory for nationalism!

H.

NEW PAMPHLET.

We are proposing to publish a new pamphlet, but we cannot do so until we have the money. If we print 20,000 copies the cost will be in the neighbourhood of £100. We ask, therefore, for donations. As soon as we get sufficient to justify giving the order to our printer we shall be pleased to proceed.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAPITALISM AND ITS LESSONS.

For many years it has been a platitude with capitalists, and capitalist newspapers, that agitators are the cause of discontent among the workers. Many workers who unquestioningly absorb capitalist ideas and opinions themselves believe it to be true.

The labour agitators are undoubtedly on the increase. There is money in the business. It is a calling that appeals to those who love to be in the limelight, and like most callings is becoming terribly overcrowded.

To become a labour leader, either on the industrial or political field, is one way of escaping from the onerous conditions of capitalist employment, or possibly unemployment. In this we find evidence that it is not agitators who make discontent, but that it is the already existing discontent of the workers with their conditions that makes agitators possible. Capitalist conditions of employment are so wretched that many of those with ability slightly above the average endeavour to escape them by becoming leaders. Too often it must be admitted, such aspirants care little where they lead the workers. Their chief concern is where and what they get themselves. While those who cannot escape in this way, the majority of the workers, are ready to listen to anyone who will promise them some improvement in their lot.

For many years before the possibility of leaders living on the backs of the workers could be foreseen, the workers themselves used to meet secretly to discuss their grievances and agree upon common action against the masters. The chief grievance then and since has always been the low standard of living forced on them by means of the wages system. The trade union movement, as we know it to-day, has grown out of those secret meetings, that had their origin in the early days of the factory system, in the North of England. The degrading conditions of employment and the low standard of living were the cause of discontent then as they are now.

Trade unions were originally organisations to raise or maintain wages. As the workers realised the advantages of combination in this direction, trade unions grew up in one industry after another. While the

capitalists were disunited, the unions met with frequent successes. Every success was an inducement to others to organise. It was out of these successes, and the recognition by the workers, that if they did not organise against the masters, their wages would be forced ever lower, that trade unionism grew to its present dimensions.

But side by-side with the growth of trade unions, and in a great measure responsible for its rapid and enormous growth, there took place what has been, in all probability the greatest and most sensational movement in history. This was the invention and introduction of labour saving machinery and methods, which has developed from its simplest forms to its present complexity and importance during the same period.

An adequate idea of the effects of labour-saving machinery and methods on production and employment can be obtained from the S.P.G.B. pamphlet "Socialism," pages 9 and 10. It is there shown what a relatively small proportion of the population can, by modern methods, produce all the wealth for which markets are available. So efficient are these powers of production that capitalists everywhere find it necessary to restrict them. In many industries capitalists have combined for the purpose of ascertaining the market and dividing the amount of production necessary between them. By this means they avoid over-production; competition is eliminated, and prices can be kept up. It is thus seen that by their ownership of the means of wealth-production, capitalists can and do hold up production to suit their own ends. The only useful purpose of labour-saving methods is, consequently defeated. That purpose, for a sane people, can only be to satisfy their material needs with the smallest expenditure of energy. But this is impossible unless the people own the means of wealth-production and use them by common agreement to satisfy their needs.

It would be stupid to denounce capitalists for restricting production, however. It would be absurd from their point of view if they allowed the production of commodities to go on when there was no sale for them. Their need is evidently for wider markets, but where can they be found with-

out elbowing other capitalists out of their preserves? One reform party, the I.L. proposes to find them by persuading the capitalists themselves to pay higher wages. In other words, that capitalists should extend their markets by giving the workers more money to spend.

Without questioning the philanthropy of the capitalists or the strength of the trade unions to enforce higher wages, the futility of such a reform is shown by America's example. In the United States higher wages are paid than in most other capitalist countries. As a set-off against these higher wages, however, must be reckoned the much higher cost of living. But higher wages are not paid, either in America or anywhere else, unless individual production is increased. In other words, higher wages are paid to a few men for producing as much as had been produced by many. Higher wages, in this sense, by the fact that unemployment is increased, really spell a wage reduction for the workers as a whole.

We should expect to find, if the above is correct, that unemployment in the States is extensive, in spite of the enormous trade they boast. We are not surprised, therefore, to read the following reference to conditions in the U.S.A. :—

The Mackenzie report takes a million and a half unemployed at any time as more or less normal; Trade Union evidence suggests a far higher figure. There is no security of employment—the rate of labour turnover is as high as 300 per cent. per annum.

The above is from the "New Leader" (17/6/27, p. 6), the organ of the I.L.P., that advocates the same policy for this country. While nobody would be so fool-hardy as to deny that a high wage is better than a low one, the amount of poverty must necessarily increase as the number of workers who receive wages at all are reduced.

The main fact that stands out clearly is that the number of workers required to produce the world's wealth is constantly diminishing. As unemployment increases, competition for jobs intensifies in proportion. The conditions of labour become more exacting. Wages, generally, fall rather than rise. The same problem as of old faces the workers. Not only their standard of living, but their security is threatened. But the irony of the situation lies in the fact that the enormous development in the means of wealth-production has made security of

life possible at a far higher standard than ever before. Possible, that is, when the workers see the necessity for making those means of production the common property of society.

What is the solution? Evidently not by paying a minority higher wages to do all the work, and sacking the majority. Nor yet by pointing the way to new markets, fighting for them, as in the great war; or even by entering with zest into the competitive struggle to help one capitalist group to win markets from another. None of these things will help the workers.

A few moments' consideration will show that poverty exists for the workers because they are unable to use the means of wealth-production to satisfy their needs. The means of production are the property of the capitalists, who only permit the workers to use them on condition that the product belongs to them. What the worker gets we have seen, while the capitalist controls the rest. Taking no share in the work of production the capitalists nevertheless are able to appropriate in this way approximately two-thirds of the total wealth. In addition to this, by virtue of their ownership, they hold up production until they have found markets for the product.

There can only be one solution for the workers. They must take over the means of wealth-production, making them the common property of society. These means can then be democratically controlled by the people, and used for the purpose of satisfying their needs.

For this organisation is necessary; and history and commonsense alike dictate that the form of that organisation must be political. That its first concern must be with the capture of the parliamentary institutions controlling the forces that make capitalist government possible. This much being achieved, the way will be cleared for the establishment of the new order—Socialism.

F. F.

CORRESPONDENCE.

E. Wright (Southwark).—If you can reduce the chaos of statements in your letter to a coherent and intelligible form, we may be prepared to deal with your views. In their present shape it is impossible to do so.
Ed., Com.

ECONOMIC TENDENCIES.

... and still the Socialist utters his mumbo jumbo about the imminent coming of the Socialist state; as a fact the whole tendency of our times is in the direction of the multiplicity of small capitalists, every one of whom is a bulwark against Socialism. This increasing growth in the wealth of the wage-earning classes which gathers impetus before our eyes is the whole justification of the principles of Capitalism. (Business Organisation, April.)

If Capitalism is justified on the basis of the above piffle, then its defenders must indeed be running short of subtle and plausible excuses for the existence of working-class poverty: Socialists are not concerned with the "coming" of any state, but with its "going." With the establishment of classless society (Socialism), institutions such as the State, Government, etc., could serve no purpose: Without a subject class to govern and repress, the object of their existence to-day, their function would be ended. Regarding the growth of "small" Capitalists, one would have thought that in face of the growth of combines, trusts and amalgamations within the last generation, the fact of the concentration of Capital would have a commonplace admission. If the tendency is toward an increase of Capitalists, why is it that every trade paper devotes columns to the reports of bankruptcies in their particular trade? If the smaller fry are unable to stand the competitive pace of to-day, the process is obviously a "coming down," and not a "going up" one. These business wiseacres have so much justification for capitalist principles that in the same issue of their journal they furnish us with the evidence that gives the lie direct to their previous statement.

Proof :—

"Personal ownership has given way to the Limited Liability Company, and to-day this is rapidly becoming the large combine or group of companies. . . . the employer is now identified with an association, and these associations are also combined into large federations"—Ibid.

Imagine the chance that the budding capitalist would have arriving on the scene to compete with the combine or the group of companies. Yet this is the sort of argument that justifies this "rosy" outlook. The present state of affairs is becoming fatal to the small investor. With the stagnation due to want of markets, his investment brings small return in a safe concern, whilst it is well-known what easy prey such investors make for the bogus or apparently promising financial adventure. Karl Marx demonstra-

ted in a way what to-day reads like prophecy—how the battle of competition between the Capitalists is fought out on the basis of cheapening commodities. This is done by increasing the productivity of labour through up-to-date machinery, large scale production and so on. In competition, therefore, the largest capitals beat the smaller. Our opponents, in their weak attempt to meet the Socialist case, pay tribute to the analysis Marx made, and by which he showed the broadening and the deepening of the gulf between the Capitalists and the Workers. It is this gulf that intensifies the antagonism between the two classes as non-producers and owners, and producers but non-owners of wealth respectively.

When I started business in America Andrew Carnegie told me, "All you want to do is to buy brains." (Sir Algernon Frith, *Shoe and Leather Record*, 6/5/27.)

Simple, isn't it? Obviously they don't buy their own brains. Those brains belong to workers, even if in return they receive salary and dress so like the buyers. The latter may be prospectus ornaments of any number of concerns, while the actual, as distinct from the nominal directing, is undertaken by these "special kind of wage earners." The "Daily Chronicle" (16/11/26), commenting on the increase in the numbers seeking these kinds of jobs, made a discovery and headed their comments: "Brains nearly as cheap as Brawn."
MAC.

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The Socialist Standard,

JULY,



1927

A. J. COOK

VERSUS

HERBERT SMITH.

Those who criticise leaders, but continue to believe in the need for leadership, usually fasten upon the personal defects of the man they condemn. What the workers want, according to these critics, is better leaders, leaders who can be trusted. In Herbert Smith and Arthur Cook, the miners have, so far as it is possible to judge, two leaders who are to be trusted in the sense that no one has ever yet accused them of betraying the miners to the mineowners, and it is hardly conceivable that they have done so or deliberately would do so. Yet we unhesitatingly warn the miners not to put their trust in Smith and Cook, or in anyone else. Our case is that the working-class movement will never succeed until the workers put all of their trust in themselves, formulate their own policy, and instruct their representatives to pursue it, with a full recognition that the responsibility for success or failure must rest on their own shoulders, and cannot without grave danger be placed on those of leaders.

Recently, both Cook and Smith have advised the miners how to escape from the difficulties they are in. A. J. Cook says ("Sunday Worker," June 5th):—

We must get power in the shape of a Miners' National Union backed up by a 100 per cent. organisation. Then we will be able to speak to the owners and the Government in the only

language they understand. . . . The only way out is for an International Miners' Organisation that will engage upon a struggle to arrange the hours, wages and working conditions. This would end the present cut-throat competition that is starving the miners in every capitalist country in the world.

Mr. Herbert Smith, on the contrary, said ("Daily Herald," June 6th):—

More and more in the future we have to think, talk and act politically. We have to fight in the House of Commons instead of on the stomachs of the women and children. We can get all we want by marking the ballot paper properly.

Now it is impossible for both Cook and Smith to be right. It cannot be true that each of both political and industrial action is the best of all possible ways. I would go further, and say that as both Cook and Smith are aiming not at Socialism, but at Nationalisation, which will not solve any of the miners' problems, it does not matter much which means the miners adopt to achieve an undesirable end, and that Cook and Smith are both wrong. The question of the moment is, however, what is the use of leaders? Having heard two conflicting pieces of advice, the miners cannot simply trust their leaders, they have to make a deliberate choice which one of them to trust. As this cannot properly be made without examining critically the advice given, the miners might just as easily recognise that there is no inspired person able to do their thinking and solve their problems for them. The sooner they recognise this, the sooner they will recognise also the limitations and useful qualities of Smith and Cook, and utilise them accordingly to carry out a genuine working-class policy framed by the miners themselves.

THE MOSCOW EXECUTIONS.

The Communist Editor of the "Sunday Worker" (June 19th), defends the execution of 20 political prisoners by the Soviet Government as an "act of stern revolutionary justice." My thought on reading this was to wonder why the Russians allow soft-headed Communists in this country to broadcast such sentimental poppy-cock in their name. When professional politicians like Lloyd George or MacDonald speak as if they are the humble instruments of the Almighty, dealing out even-handed justice in a wicked world, we recognise an accepted trick of an old-established trade, but the

Communists should be above such things. The working-class movement has no need to defend its actions on the illogical ground that they are in accord with some everlasting standard of abstract justice, or on the ground that those who suffer from those actions have "deserved" what they get. If the working-class should ever be compelled to take human life, its only justification—and that a sufficient one—is that working-class interests necessitate that action. If one may believe some of the Communists, these 20 prisoners were executed out of revenge for the assassination of Voikoff in Warsaw. If so, that is a piece of indefensible emotionalism, for which the working-class movement has no use. If the rigid test of working-class interests is applied, it is hard to see how this action could assist the progress of Socialism. It may be answered that those in control of the Russian Government thought that it was called for in order to serve some interest of State, to enhance the prestige of Russia by a defiant gesture. Our answer to this is that as Socialists, we are not interested in the game of "Statecraft" and we repudiate the notion that "reasons of State" can be adequate grounds on which to base working-class policy. When the Russian Communists allow themselves to be drawn into the bogs of diplomatic intrigue, trying to play off one capitalist state against another, they may prove as cunning as their opponents (although this is doubtful—certainly, the present incident has not added to their reputation for wisdom or strength) but the pleasure gained through the satisfaction of their desire for revenge will be at the direct expense of the real interests of the working-class.

KNOWLEDGE.

The following Books can be obtained from Head Office:—

- Anarchism and Socialism. Plechanoff. 3/6, paper 1/2.
- Civil War in France. Marx 2/9.
- Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844. Engels. 5/-
- Critique of Political Economy. Marx. 6/6.
- 18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon. Marx. 3/6.
- Evolution of Property. Lafargue. 3/6, limp 1/6.
- Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State. Engels. 3/6.
- Poverty of Philosophy. Marx. 6/6.
- Revolution and Counter-Revolution. Marx. 3/6, limp 1/6.
- Social and Philosophical Studies. Lafargue. 3/6.
- Socialism; Utopian and Scientific. Engels. 3/6, limp 1/6. Postage extra.

WHY WE ARE SOCIALISTS.

It is by no means uncommon for anti-Socialists of various types to try to explain away Socialist principles as a result of a mental kink, as a symptom of pure cussedness, so to speak. This attitude finds considerable encouragement in the posturing of the sentimentalists of the Labour Party and kindred bodies. To judge by the speeches and writings of many of these worthies, they "thank God that they are not as other men are"—that their pure and lofty aims spring from hearts brimming over with loving-kindness to all mankind—in vivid contrast with the base machinations of their "hard-faced" opponents.

The members of the Socialist Party, however, make no such angelic pretensions. Our temperaments are as varied as our physical qualities, and these, again, are as numerous as those of the rats in Browning's "Pied Piper of Hamelin." Attend one of our annual conferences and you will observe the lean and the fat, the tall and the short, the bald and shock-headed, the ugly and the—well, we will not claim that anyone is pretty; somehow capitalism doesn't have that effect. As for mental disposition, you will find the verbose and the reserved, the calm and the excitable, the artistically loose and the mechanically precise, all contributing their quota to the discussion, and either impeding or expediting the business to the best of their ability; and while this is not the place in which to disclose unofficial secrets, we may perhaps admit that there are to be found in our ranks both the austere and abstemious, and those who indulge not wisely but too well—tho' in this respect, again, the system we oppose involves obvious limitations.

Whence, then, arises this tendency to regard the Socialist as a crank—a conceited meddler with the welfare of the human race? The answer becomes obvious the moment we consider just what it is that Socialists have in common.

Despite the variety of their physique and character, almost all, without exception, are drawn from a certain class in society, i.e., the working-class. The Socialist may be distinguished from his fellows perhaps by his greater sensitiveness to certain aspects of his environment, by his keener insight into conditions, and his greater readiness to grasp general causes; but that in itself does not explain the ideas he has.

There are adaptable men and women of mental vigour among the members of the capitalist class, but they do not become Socialists. On the contrary, their class interests lead them to oppose the Socialist movement with all the greater steadfastness the more they understand the conditions under which they live.

There have been, it is true, capitalists who have accepted the Socialist outlook through the operation of exceptional circumstances, but in order to do this they have had to forsake the standpoint of their own class and to study the position of the workers. That is the crux of the matter—the struggle between workers and capitalists forms the basis of Socialist ideas.

The Socialist is discontented, but so are many non-Socialists.

There has been widespread discontent under previous forms of society. The serfs and burghers under feudalism, the slaves under the Roman Empire, were the victims of oppression, and occasionally revolted; but their revolt did not form a Socialist movement. Their aims were either personal freedom and more private property, or some vague Kingdom of God in which all material problems would find magical solution. Scientific Socialism could arise only when the development of machinery had rendered antiquated all the old utopias and made the common ownership and democratic control of the means of life both possible and necessary.

So long as the means of production were small and could be operated by individuals or groups in isolated villages, the total wealth produced was insufficient to provide all with comfort and leisure. Hence private property was the necessary condition of security for producer and parasite alike, and the struggle between them was a struggle for one form or another of private property. The feudal lords struggled with their peasants over the land, but whichever side won held to the private form of ownership. The merchants and the handicraftsmen struggled over conditions of trade and production, but each side saw their "beau ideal" in the individually owned workshop or sum of money.

What is the position to-day? Millions of wage-earners co-operate, directly and indirectly, in the production of the wealth of the world, which is so abundant that it suffocates the markets. The means of production are so huge that they have long ago

passed out of purely individual control. The individual capitalist only holds so many shares in a giant concern which may extend its operations over the whole earth. The vast mass of the producers are disinherited. For them private property has long ago ceased to exist. They have nothing to struggle over of an individual nature except wages; and these can only be defended (and but seldom extended) by collective action.

If under these conditions the workers still idealise private property, that is only because they have not yet fully realised their position. If the grasping of new facts is the hall-mark of the crank, then Socialists are cranks; but the only people whose interests are served by the worker's ignorance are the parasites.

E.B.

The Police-aided scheme for destitute children in Edinboro' has had to provide boots for 4,600 children during the past winter as compared with 2,500 a year ago. (*Daily Herald*, 30/4/27.)

This is the sort of "progress" that will cheer that brand of optimist who finds the workers' conditions improving, because, in addition to the small fraction of their total output returned as wages, necessity compels sections to accept insurance benefits, pensions, relief, etc. Reasoning from such mental shallowness, it would appear that the more we need such things, the happier we shall be.

* * *

I am an old Socialist and I have done more for the British Worker than any Red-flag-waving churl in the kingdom. (Robert Blatchford, *Sunday News*, 8/5/27.)

For "British Worker" read Robert Blatchford. Those who remember this gentleman's boasting of Tariff Reform, big navalism, conscription, municipal bakeries and milkshops, everything on earth to Spiritualism in the clouds, will appreciate this modest claim. In the opinion of R. B. he is an old Socialist. Our evidence from the past shows him to be an old prevaricator of the truth.

• MAC.

GLASGOW.

Sympathisers in and around Glasgow, who are willing to assist in re-forming the Glasgow branch, are asked to communicate immediately with HEAD OFFICE.

IS A SOCIALIST POLICY APPLICABLE TO AMERICA.

A Correspondent's Letter and Our Reply.

Crockett, California.

I am an interested, though at present unaffiliated sympathiser, in fact an adherent to the principles and programme of your party, and have been in the recent past aligned with small study groups both in Detroit and in New York, patterned very much along the same line as your organisation in point of principles.

The question I am about to ask may or may not be fatuous, or ambiguous, it may even have been already gone over in your columns several times in the past year. I have not been able to get copies of your paper in a long time, but now that I live adjacent to San Francisco, I can get the "Standard" at McDonald's book store as often as it comes, hoping that my query is given an airing in an early issue.

The Kautskian position is, as I understand it, fully endorsed by the S.P. of G.B., particularly where it emphasises the prime importance above all things of political action in the form of parliamentary representation, and by using the constitutional camouflage of the bourgeois state, as a means to attain power. All schemes, such as military coups de etat, are in that case foredoomed, and in the final analysis Socialism as Marx has it, must come about only through the efforts by and for the immense majority. Otherwise, it is not Socialism. Agreed.

Is the editor able to answer a question that only has to do with America? If so how would he deal with a political situation at present, such as it now exists in the United States, that on the surface of it, and as far as the interests of the proletarian revolutionary movement is concerned, is well-nigh hopeless? I have run across this continent time and again over a decade, and have conversed with countless numbers of workers everywhere, besides reading contemporary periodical literature, giving a more or less accurate expression to the prevailing psychology of the American people. The popular notion is growing, and by now has become well-nigh universal, that political campaigns, election promises and programmes, ballots and everything else that goes with it, is hopelessly corrupt, and the very mention of Socialists, as a trial propo-

sition, in way of political power, elicits no response.

The power of big business and the seemingly impregnable position of finance and industrial capital has, as it were, completely cowed and rendered tame the immense majority of the people in the United States. In the face of all this, what is there to be hoped for, if we are to go by what Kautsky tells us, and assuming that American "prosperity" breaks down in a year or two and renders living almost insupportable for millions who are now employed, and are living in a fools' paradise, to hear them talk, how is that condition going to bring about a swing towards anything that resembles intelligent co-operation in the working-class?

Can the inhibitions and ingrained superstitions of an idiotically ignorant and proud people such as the average Anglo-Saxon and Celtic, native American, be overcome and give way to a change of sentiment from that of extreme egotistic individualism to that of a class-consciousness in its correct sense in anything less than another generation? Does biology, and several other sciences, that deal with man, his physical and mental make-up, give us any hopes for a possibility of any much to be hoped for, sudden change, or at least a mental condition that will even listen to Socialist propaganda?

I am not in the habit of transcribing articles, or writing anything, and you can condense this as you see fit, and answer it as far as you are capable of doing, living as you do, so far away from these conditions as they appear to me. In short, will Kautsky's premise fit this country. I close hoping that you will give this due consideration and I remain,

Yours in revolt,

M. WASSON.

OUR REPLY.

The above letter sets out by associating us with Kautsky's attitude, and as the latter has continually shifted his ground politically, we must decline to be identified with such an anti-Socialist as Kautsky has shown himself to be.

Kautsky has, however, offered unanswerable criticisms of Lenin's views on democracy and dictatorship, and no doubt our Californian correspondent has these points in mind.

The main question in the above letter deals with the application of Marx's (and

therefore the S.F.G.B.'s) policy to the United States. Socialist policy naturally depends for its application upon the conditions prevailing in a country, but those who argue that conditions in any country warrant an entirely different policy to ours, generally fail to deal with the so-called differences in conditions between this and other countries.

The widespread ignorance of class interests among workers in U.S.A. offers no permanent hindrance to our Socialist policy. That ignorance is due to certain causes, and the lack of interest in revolutionary ideas amongst the masses is a phase which is true of every country for a time.

Economic development has rapidly converted the United States from a prairie into a nation of vast companies, where the largest and latest plant and machinery is in use, each employing many thousands under one roof.

The comparatively recent industrial growth and commercial expansion of the U.S.A. offers one reason for the so-called "better conditions" of labour. This is partly responsible for the lack of interest in social change amongst the workers there. This lack of interest, however, is not simply a reflex of "better" conditions, but a result of capitalist propaganda by press, priest and schoolmaster, which is more powerfully and carefully used in American life than perhaps any other country, to mould the working millions to capitalist views. The extremely careful selection of and control over teachers in school and college to avoid any advanced political views being taught, is notorious. Then we have the intense campaigns always subsidised to naturalise the immigrant and "educate" him into worship of American institutions. The unexampled dominion of a vast newspaper and magazine press pouring out lies to cloud the "popular" mind is an immense factor in working-class ignorance there.

The primitive and highly-organised and well-financed religious bodies of America still have a remarkably large influence in U.S.A. These agencies of propaganda employed to keep the workers submissive, are effective because temporarily the conditions in the United States have not caused deep and lasting discontent. If a collapse of conditions causes vast discontent, can anything be hoped for if the working-class are ignorant of Socialism?

Such is the question asked by our correspondent.

Discontent in itself is not sufficient. We had 6 or 7 millions out of work in America in 1921 and 1922, but they were largely seeking charity or temporary relief whilst hoping for better times. They did not revolt though the Communists there told them the factories would never re-open, and that the revolution was on the way.

The insecurity of work in a country so highly productive and so scientifically organised in production as America is a very important element in the workers' life, and the growing experience of this in recent years does play a part in the workers' education. The apparent slowness of change in ideas amongst the workers there is evidently one of our questioner's stumbling-blocks.

If he expects vast and rapid changes amongst the majority in a few years he is likely to be disillusioned. America has profited by European decline since the war, and has captured many of their markets, especially those on the American continent, and so for a while she will be able to keep the wheels turning. Apart from that aspect, however, there is the fact to be faced that conditions in so vast and so recently developed a country as the U.S.A. cannot change the individualist outlook to a Socialist one overnight.

The conditions for generations bred an optimism and an individualism amongst the migrating settlers, and only continual experience of the insecurity and suffering of capitalist development can be effective in turning them to Socialist education for enlightenment.

Our experience and general information shows that interest in Socialist ideas and desire for social change does grow in the United States. The vast literature, even of Marx and Engels (apart from the more popular) which has been sold in America is an example that all is not as black as our questioner thinks. One large factor in their backwardness is the deliberate use of the labour leader over there as well as here, to confuse and mislead the worker. From Gompers down to the Communists parading as left-wing labour leaders, these have all been well used to side-track the worker. And as recent revelations and many "raids" and trials have shown, prominent Communists over there have been used by the authorities to preach violence by minorities, and so frighten wage-workers away from

even the name of Socialism and Communism.

That conditions are likely to develop anti-capitalist views amongst the workers in U.S.A. is so well-known to the capitalists there that they have spent fabulous sums in controlling almost every agency of education and opinion, including the labour leader.

The open and constant use of the wealth of the few to control affairs by so-called corruption is inevitable, especially in the U.S.A., where the relatively few large owners do not enter into politics themselves, but hire the lawyers and professors to run affairs in their interest. Politics in America are as corrupt possibly as trade union officialism there. This, however, will not prevent or influence the awakened worker once he realises that economic and political action are essential for him, and that neither political or economic action are in themselves corrupt or need ever be corrupt once the workers understand and control the economic and political organisations for themselves and in their own interest.

With the overwhelming mass of the population in America being workers and possessing the majority of the votes as they do, there is no hindrance to them controlling the State machine in America for themselves once they want to and know what to do with it. There is no other way but control of political power in U.S.A., and the stupendous economic development of that country cannot but quicken what has already commenced—the ripening of the working-class mind, and the eventual acceptance of the Socialist position.

A. KOHN.

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THE VALUE OF THE FRANCHISE.

The correspondent whose letter was dealt with in our May issue writes again. His letter and our comment are given below:—
To the Editor.

Thanks for the consideration of my letter under above heading in S. S. May. We want the facts certainly, not so much that they prove our case, but because they are facts. It is absurd to draw the inference that I am a busy body nobly searching for "injustices" to put right, but I am not half so enthusiastic as your good selves in your endeavour to prove the "injustice" but a little one. The extracts you give from the Acts of 1918 are quite correct, but I am by no means impressed by your figures when I know that almost every brick that stands on top of another, and almost every piece of enclosed land, carries a vote, and I am convinced that such is by no means a negligible factor in determining the result of an election. On the authority of an official connected with the compilation of the voting register, I am enabled to state that, while the act says that a person may not vote in more than two divisions at a general election, the lawyers have found a flaw in the Act which enables a person to exercise the vote under business premises or occupational clauses in as many pieces of property above a certain value in separate divisions (as they may possess. As this applies, not only to the actual owner, but the members of his or her family, and in the case of a limited company, to the directors and their dependents, the plural vote assumes enormous dimensions. I am not able to state definitely the nature of the "flaw" in the Act, but should imagine that it has something to do with the Acts round about the time of the Charles'.

"No taxation without representation."

You ask me how many persons there are in the family cited who qualify for twelve votes in the three Leicester divisions. Four—father, mother and two sons. You also ask me to state the disqualifications which militate against working-class representation, and I will name a few: for instance, soldiers and sailors (R.N.), lodgers and boarders of the artisan class, who form the bulk of the floating population, inmates of workhouses and other Poor Law institutions, the Mercantile Marine in most cases, as they never know where they will be at the time of an election. As to the proxy

vote, you speak as if, when those on the absent voters' list die off, there will be no more. Then, of course, we come to the final argument. If the plural vote is of such infinitesimal importance as you would lead your readers to believe, why do the Capitalist Class retain it? They are not such fools as to cling to a thing which carries with it a certain amount of odium, unless it is of use to them. Perhaps you can find an excuse.

F. L. RIMINGTON.

REPLY.

I did not suggest that Mr. Rimington is interested in searching for "injustices" to put right. What I said was that we are not interested in doing so.

Mr. Rimington "is not impressed" by the figures given in my article but does not show where they are in error. He cannot, in the circumstances, expect me to be impressed by his repetition of his criticisms: He says he "knows" that "almost every brick . . . carries a vote." If it did, the plural vote would not be a negligible factor. But it does not, as I showed, and I repeat, therefore, that it is a negligible factor. Against my figures from official sources of the negligible number of business premises votes, Mr. Rimington refers to an unnamed "official connected with the voting register," in proof of the existence of a "flaw in the Act," the nature of which he is "not able to state definitely," but which he "imagines" has "something to do with the Act round about the time" of the Stuart kings. Really, Mr. Rimington, how can you expect such nebulous stuff to be answered?

Mr. Rimington lists a number of obstacles which may make it difficult for some workers to use their votes, but he does not answer the main point of my reply, which was that, in fact, the workers have so overwhelming a majority of votes that, allowing for these disabilities and all the plural votes of the employers, the working class are in a position to swamp the master class at the polls. If this is true in fact, then the anomalies are negligible. If it is not true, it is for Mr. Rimington to show that it is not true. The reference to the proxy vote and the dead I do not understand.

Mr. Rimington's final point is that the capitalists would not keep the plural vote unless it were worth something to them.

In the first place, I did not deny that it is useful. I expressly pointed out that it gives them the control of a certain few constituencies like the City of London, and this is valuable to them. But the loss of the City of London is not of so great importance to the workers that it is worth while suspending Socialist propaganda in order to secure further amendments in the franchise law. It may, however, be pointed out in passing that the Capitalists are, contrary to Mr. Rimington's belief, "such fools" as to cling to useless forms. The long resistance of influential capitalist circles to any extension of the franchise in the 19th century shows that they were "such fools" as not to realise that the workers, when given votes, would use those votes for the retention of the capitalist system.

In conclusion, I would repeat that the only major obstacle to socialism is the non-socialist outlook of the workers, not anomalies in the franchise law. If those anomalies were abolished to-morrow, the great mass of the workers would still vote capitalist candidates into Parliament.

H.

THE "EMPIRE" IN THE TROPICS.

[British Imperialism in West Africa. 64 pp. Labour Research Department, 162, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1. Price 6d.]

The above pamphlet constitutes No. 4 of the Colonial Series of the L.R.D. It reviews in brief the various stages by which British capitalist interests have acquired a grip of the economic resources of West Africa, including the labour power of the natives. Broadly speaking, the process is similar to that in East Africa and other tropical countries illustrated from time to time in these columns. The main difference is that it commenced at an earlier date, and has reached a higher stage of development.

In East Africa British influence had to contend from the first with the Arab slave-power. Its initial enterprises in that direction could conveniently assume the hypocritical guise of philanthropy, i.e., the suppression of the slave trade. In West Africa, however, British heroes from the time of Drake and Hawkins down to the latter end of the 18th century had indulged in the time-honoured practice of carrying off the comparatively defenceless inhabitants and selling them to the plantation-owners

of the American colonies. This policy led to such a serious reduction in the population in these regions that the trading companies, which eventually sought profit there in other forms, actually had to bring back slaves liberated from America in order to provide themselves with a labour supply.

These companies extended their influence from the coast to the interior by intrigues with native chiefs (ready to sell even the land and persons of their tribesmen for whisky and trousers) until the inevitable revolts arose, which necessitated falling back upon the support of the Imperial Government. This led, as in India and elsewhere, to the companies selling out to the Government, which henceforth assumed control and responsibility for the administration of the areas concerned.

As a result of this change the native chiefs became, in practice, unofficial agents of the Crown. Those who proved refractory and independent were forcibly removed and replaced by others more amenable to "civilised" influences, who have been used to "collect taxes, recruit labour, supervise the native courts, and generally carry out British policy" (p. 12).

These political changes reacted inevitably upon the economic organisation of native society. Instead of producing foodstuffs for themselves the inhabitants had perforce to produce articles for sale, such as palm oil, cocoa, rubber, etc., in order to obtain the money wherewith to pay the taxes; and as they found that, even by these means, their income was insufficient, numbers of them had recourse to the labour market and sold their energies for wages.

Native chiefs and traders developed into small farmers, exploiting their own tribesmen. Tribal land became private property and the old communal organisation and customs fell into decay, and the population became simply a source of raw material for large-scale capitalist industry.

Being dependent upon the wholesale buying concerns, the native producers find their position growing steadily worse. They have to meet the competition of large-scale plantations in other countries, which results in a lowering of their prices, while, on the other hand, the destruction of their old mode of life increases their wants, which tend to become more "civilised."

From this external and internal pressure there appears to be no escape short of a complete economic change the world over.

In addition to the soap and cocoa trusts, other capitalist interests have a finger in the pie of colonial development. The heavy iron industry finds room for expansion in the construction of railways, harbours, docks, etc., while behind them the financiers scoop up interest on loans for these enterprises, most of which are State owned. In fact State "Socialism" thrives to such an extent in the tropical Colonies that Mr. Ormsby-Gore (Under-Secretary for the Colonies) proposed in a recent Report that the Government itself should start plantations in order "to set an example" to the natives in large-scale production. What effect this procedure would have on the already impoverished small-peasantry can readily be imagined. The State would conscript labour-power for its plantations as it does for its transport and other public works. The few native "large fish" would swallow up the "little fish" at a more rapid rate, and the outside trusts would gain the benefit of improved efficiency and organisation.

E. B.

Never has Le Touquet seen bigger gambling than this Whitsun. . . . Banks of £2,500 were by no means uncommon, and the losing of a million francs was a frequent occurrence. (Daily Mail, 8/6/27.)

Karl Marx showed that, in contrast to the earlier parsimony of the Capitalist Class, profligate extravagance becomes a normal expenditure to them as an off-set to the enormous increase of their wealth. The above is only an incident which shows that our masters can afford to gamble away at one sitting an amount that has to suffice to keep a worker's family for years.

MAC.

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Victoria Park, 4 p.m.
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.
Paddington, Prince of Wales, 11.30 a.m.
Bethnal Green, opposite Salmon and Ball, 7.30 p.m.

Mondays: Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.

Wednesdays: Hackney, Paragon Rd. and Mare St. 8 p.m.
Leyton, James Lane, High Road, 8 p.m.

Fridays: Battersea, Masons Arms, 8 p.m.
Clerkenwell, Almeida St., Upper St., N., 8 p.m.
West Ham, Water Lane 8 p.m.

HANLEY BRANCH MEETINGS.

Sundays: Hanley, Market Square, 7 p.m.
Burslem, St. John's Square, 7 p.m.

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- HULL.**—Branch meetings, Tuesday, at 8 p.m., at the Trade and Labour Club (Jarratt Street entrance). Discussion after meeting. All readers in Hull requested to attend.
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OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great
HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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LONDON, AUGUST, 1927.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

IS BRITAIN OVER-POPULATED ?

(By R. B. KERR, 97, North Sydenham Road, Croydon. 118 pages. 1s.)

Mr. Kerr presents the familiar case for a reduction of the population by means of birth control. His argument is that the population per square mile in England is much greater than in a number of countries, and hence the prosperity of this country is less than it might be, and less than in America, Australia and other sparsely-populated areas. He is quite confident that "the reason and the only reason" why the U.S.A., Canada, New Zealand, etc., are "so much more prosperous than Great Britain" is that they "are thinly-populated in proportion to their natural resources" (p. 33).

It is not only the familiar case put forward by the birth controllers, but it bristles with all of the familiar fallacies. Mr. Kerr is an industrious disher-up of unrelated trifles, but he has not succeeded in presenting a convincing or even coherent argument. He discusses "over-population" and "prosperity" without even attempting to define these very elusive terms. He does mention the optimum density (i.e., that density of population at which productivity is at a maximum), but whereas serious economists like Professor Cannan candidly confess that they have not the remotest idea what in fact that density is, Mr. Kerr tells us on his own unsupported authority that it would mean a population "so much thinner than the present that we shall probably never reach it" (p. 114). Then, having forgotten this bold assertion, he goes on to admit that the problem of determining "what is an optimum population" has yet to be solved (p. 115).

Mr. Kerr does not offer one particle of proof that the optimum density is less than the present one. It might be greater.

Prosperity is, again, a term requiring a little attention. Mr. Kerr ignores the enormous inequality of wealth existing within every nation, whether thickly or thinly populated. The U.S.A., he says, is prosperous because of its relatively small population, Great Britain is less prosperous because of its big population. Are there then no millionaires, and is there no wealthy propertied class in this country? And are there no destitute persons in the U.S.A.?

For Mr. Kerr there are no class divisions in society. He selects Great Britain as his unit, instead of the British Empire as a whole (this would have upset his theory), on the ground that the relations between the Dominions and Great Britain are purely commercial ones—not sentimental. He says, truly enough, "Out of his bursting bins the Canadian farmer will not give his Mother Country a single bushel of wheat, except for payment in cash" (p. 9). But since it is equally true that the English farmer does not open his "bursting bins" to the English factory owner or factory worker "except for payment in cash," why not take as the unit London, or Lincolnshire, or compare all the English towns with the whole rural areas? It would be just as sound and just as useless as any other comparison of density of population as a guide to wealth.

Niggardly Nature.

Mr. Kerr dismisses the contention that Nature is sufficiently bountiful for our needs by quoting Sir J. Stamp on the distribution

of wealth. He does not deal with the admitted fact that nowadays, in almost every highly-organised industry, there is deliberate restriction of output in order to maintain prices and profits. Is nature niggardly in oil, or coal, or cotton, or wheat, or rubber?

The much-quoted figures presented by Sir J. Stamp also deserve attention. Stamp points out that, if all incomes over £250 were reduced to £250 and the surplus equally divided between all the families in the country, the gain per family would not exceed 5s. per week. In the first place, the great mass of the workers do not receive £250 a year, and an equal division of the national income would very materially raise their standard of living. As Stamp himself point out (*Studies in Current Problems*, 1924, page 98), to raise the standard of life in the great nations by 10 per cent. would be "for the great mass of the peoples of these nations the difference between grinding penury and a reasonable standard of comfort."

Secondly, and more importantly, as is explained in detail in our pamphlet "Socialism," about half of the population between 16 and 60 are not engaged in producing wealth at all, but are either idle or are carrying on purely wasteful services called into being by the capitalist system.

Mr. Kerr trots out the old bogey of the "unfavourable balance of trade." He asks us to behold a column of trade figures and be suitably horrified, but he makes no effort to explain what it all means. That international trade is merely an extension of the ordinary division of labour, and is economically profitable to both parties, he has not grasped. Hence his forecast that in a "Birth-Controlled World" each country will do the bulk of its own manufacturing, and will live in the main on the products of its own soil" (p. 110).

Population and War.

Mr. Kerr quotes Shelley and Mussolini to prove that over-population is the cause of modern wars. According to the table of relative densities, it would appear from this that England—having a density nearly twice that of Germany—must have been responsible for the war. It is, of course, nonsense. The urge to find markets and sources of raw materials affects every capitalist country, irrespective of population. American exports of capital, and consequent deliberate

war with Spain, her brutal suppression of the Phillipines and present endeavours to create an Empire covering all Central and South America, are the outcome of capitalist organisations, and are not to be checked by birth control devices.

Mr. Kerr quotes a Japanese newspaper in support of his contention that, in a conflict between natural law (e.g., pressure of population) and man-made law, the natural law will prevail. This is flagrantly untrue. Is it a "natural" or a "man-made" law which prevents millions of workers on the border-line of poverty from taking possession of the wealth which they create but do not possess? What natural law prevents the unemployed from enjoying superfluous food, clothing and housing of the propertied classes? Mr. Kerr says (p. 58) that "The amount each man produces determines the amount each man can consume." In truth, the amount consumed by members of the capitalist class depends on their ownership of the means of production, which in turn depends on their control of the political machinery of society. There obviously are problems of population, but the problem of working-class poverty is not one of these. That problem cannot be solved by the workers until they have taken possession of the political machinery and re-organised society on a socialist basis. H.

AMERICAN PROSPERITY.

The financial correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* in New York writes on the present situation in America:—"Charity organisations are working overtime, hospital clinics are crowded, business failures are reported by the hundred every month, and without doubt there are more people here living on the ragged edge than ever before in the country's history."—(*Daily Telegraph*, July 2nd, 1927.)

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THE BATTLE OF THE ISMS.

When Hyam Eezi was much younger, he used to wonder what all this talk of Liberalism and Conservatism and other 'isms was about. He was puzzled. You would not have called him a deep thinker at all. He just wondered and pondered, and occasionally asked questions. "What is the difference, the *real* difference, between Liberalism and Conservatism?" he would ask. He was told that one believed in Chinese slavery and the other was opposed to it. The arguments both for and against Chinese slavery were then flung at him, and in the heat of discussion he was not at once aware that his original question remained unanswered. So that, like so many of us, he unconsciously shelved it until a more convenient season. A few years later, in one of his pondering moods he became dimly aware that he had never really got at the heart of this mystery, and he again pursued enquiries into the essential difference between the two creeds. He was surprised to learn that Chinese slavery was no longer a touchstone, but that now one was strongly advocating Tariff Reform; the other what they called Free Trade. He found himself in the midst of a deluge of technical jargon, in which imports, exports, taxation, revenue, invisible exports, and what not, battered him into mild bewilderment. "But what is Liberalism in itself," he would ask? "What is the essential Conservatism?" he would enquire.

No one could tell him. Liberal newspapers or Liberal orators would say they stood for Land Reform, or Rating Reform, or House of Lords Reform, or something of the sort. They were reformers, anyway. And then he would read Conservative newspapers, or hear Tory speakers, and be assured that Conservatism stood for taxing the foreigner, for a big navy, for Imperial expansion, for Imperial preference, for restoring the Lords' veto, and for a number of other high-sounding things. Hyam's difficulty was that neither seemed to stand for the same thing long, and that when one tried to get behind their high-sounding slogans, one was soon lost in a bewildering maze of detail. When, he thought, a man is described as an electrician, or as a dentist, or as a navvy, I know what he will do, although I may not know how he does it. Furthermore, I know that, although methods alter, there is a certain measure of

consistency between what a dentist, an electrician or a navvy did twenty years ago and what he is doing to-day and what he will do twenty years hence. But when I try to analyse what is meant by Liberalism or Conservatism, in the light of what they said or did forty years ago, twenty years ago, ten years ago, and to-day, I feel there is something missing.

Someone suggested to him that he was wrong in judging a political party as he would an individual or an occupation. But he reflected, Is it not as individuals they are presented to me? Does not the candidate at an election placard the constituency with photographs of himself and deliver shoals of leaflets telling of his outstanding personal qualities, his reputation, his residence in the constituency, his devotion to his leaders, and so on. And then his leaders; is it not as persons they are presented to me? How this one smokes a pipe and is fond of gazing at pigs; and that one covers one eye with a monocle and has a most dignified bearing; another wears strange hats; another fuzzy hair; or has a silvery, witty tongue. No! I think I do right to judge them in the way they are presented to me; for I seem as far off as ever from finding the essential difference between Liberalism and Conservatism.

And then, quite accidentally, he saw a definition of Conservatism quoted in a journal. It was attributed to a rich man named Lord Hugh Cecil, and ran as follows:

- (1) Distrust of the unknown and love of the familiar;
- (2) The defence of Church and King, the reverence for religion and authority.
- (3) A feeling for the greatness of the country and for that unity which makes for its greatness.

If the truth must be told, Hyam Eezi was not profoundly impressed by this definition. He felt that, if the first was true, he was a Conservative; the second seemed to apply equally to all the Liberals he knew; the third did not seem to fit in with his own conception of bodily comfort.

It was about this time he caught sight in a periodical of a cartoon portraying a Liberal omnibus labelled to go to a place called Westbury. The side of the 'bus was placarded with a large notice: Peace, Retrenchment and Reform. One of his Liberal friends told him that was as good a definition of Liberalism as he would get; had done duty for years in fact. Peace,

thought Hyam, yes, I'm in favour of Peace. One-third a Liberal. Retrenchment! He had to look that word up in a dictionary, and found it meant either cutting down or part of a fortification. He gathered that a Peace party could hardly be in favour of fortifications, and deduced therefore the Liberal Party were for cutting things down. Involuntarily Hyam's thoughts flew to wages, in his experience the things most often in process of being cut down. In this he was nearer to fact than he knew, but let that pass. Reform! Yes, he understood what that meant. Reform meant putting things right. And plenty of room for it too, thought Hyam. But then, in talking things over with his acquaintances, he found Conservatives in favour of Peace and Retrenchment and Reform. So he appeared to have discovered after all that, as the Irishman is alleged to have said, the only difference between them was that they were both alike, only one more so than the other.

But his great discovery followed a casual meeting with a fellow in a workman's train. Their conversation had drifted from the weather to work, from work to no work, or unemployment, from that to the Government, and then to politics generally. He confided the result of his ponderous thinking to his fellow traveller, who listened attentively, and then said: "Will you listen to me for a quarter-of-an-hour?" Hyam agreed; whereupon the stranger began:

"If you were a slave on a sugar plantation, what would for ever be uppermost in your mind?"

"Getting free," replied Hyam.

"But supposing you had been born a slave, the son and grandson of slaves; if your chains did not gall you too much; if your slavery were explained to you as perfectly natural, quite normal; the best system, in fact, that man had yet discovered; would your freedom be quite so insistent a question?"

On reflection, Hyam admitted it would not.

"Then I hope you can conceive of a time when, in order to obtain their willing consent to their slavery, the slaves are allowed to elect their own masters, and to agree on the conditions of their slavery."

Hyam could see this.

"Now, not to push the analogy too far—for these things never took place under chattel slavery—if, before the desire for liberty had been stifled or lulled to sleep, the

slaves were invited to vote for their masters on some such question as Taxation of Land Values or Reform of the Upper House, what would have been their probable reply?"

"To hell with your catch-phrases. Give us our liberty," said Hyam.

"You are right," said the stranger. "And it is only because our fellows nowadays are unconscious of their slavery that they are caught so easily with these tags. The difference between Liberalism and Conservatism is very slight, and may be compared to two friends who have different views on methods of gardening. The Liberals have one theory of taxation, the Conservatives another. The one believes in the desirability of reforms as much as the other; but they differ a little as to the most urgent reforms. The essential difference you have been looking for does not exist. They have one 'ism' in which they both believe—Capitalism. And it is in Capitalism you should interest yourself. You were telling me how at one time you found their differences to reside in varying views of Chinese slavery; at another in Free Trade versus Protection, and at another in the Lords' Veto. May I call your attention to one thing that was constant—your own condition. You were a workman all the time. All through the many elections that you have seen in your lifetime, all through the terms of office of Liberal Governments, Conservative Governments or Labour Governments, you have remained a workman. These various questions that have been dangled before you only assumed any prominence in your eyes because you were not conscious of your slave condition. Not once throughout all these years have you demanded your liberty. Not that you would have got it; for those who want liberty will have to fight for it. But that you have not demanded it shows you are unconscious of your slave position. That is the first thing to realise then, that you are one of a vast class in society that is held in subjection by another and smaller class. How are you held in subjection? By one simple feature. You are a human being and must eat in order to live, clothe yourself in order to defy the elements, shelter yourself that you may not perish. Under capitalism you can obtain them in but one way apart from stealing. You must find a master who wishes to hire human labour-power, for you must remember

human labour-power is the most wonderful thing you have heard of. Your master will bargain with you and hire your wonderful labour-power for such a sum as will enable you to buy food, clothes and shelter. With your labour-power you and your fellows will proceed to build him houses, ships, bridges, palaces, parks, railways, motor cars, hotels, roads, and a thousand things, all infinitely more valuable than the price of your labour-power. But you will not be permitted to touch them. You have been paid for the hire of your energy. And when you have filled the world so full of wealth that no more is needed, the price of your hire is discontinued, and you are given the sack. This process is believed to be the best possible by both Liberals and Conservatives. Any one who dares to criticise it is ignored as long as possible, called unpleasant names and lied about when he can no longer be ignored; hunted and imprisoned if he appears to endanger the continuance of the system. Liberals and Conservatives would each have differing views on the best way to allay the miseries attending on the state of being without a master, unemployment, as it is called. In this sense both are reformers. But neither would abolish it.

"So that, in brief, Hyam, Liberalism and Conservatism are slightly different viewpoints in the administration of Capitalism. In the defence of that system, Liberals are as conservative as the Conservatives. In dealing out reforms to keep the workers contented with things as they are, the Conservatives are as liberal as the Liberals. To judge of the value of reforms to the workers, you cannot do better than read the leading article in the *Daily News* of May 27. I'll read the commencement of it to you.

"The National Liberal Federation on its fiftieth anniversary can congratulate itself that, with the exception of land reform, every one of the reforms that year by year used to litter the agenda paper is now on the Statute Book. But the reformer is always in the position of a mountaineer. He reaches what he conceives to be the goal of his journey, only to find that there are more precipitous rocks ahead. The agenda of this year's conference is just as packed with subjects requiring urgent legislation."

"There, Hyam, how's that for half a century of progress? Perhaps in another half-century or so the reforms will come so thick and fast you will actually be conscious of improvement. But, again, as the per-

spicious leader-writer says, the reformer's life is one long surprise packet. Every rock he scales only gives him a view of more rocks. Do not follow this geological party, Hyam, or, as they plainly tell you, fifty years of that sort of progress only lands you on the rocks, and there is no finish.

"When the Socialist Party gains sufficient adherents their contribution to the Statute Book will be brief, but you will notice it. It will enact that on and after a certain date private property in the means whereby we all live shall cease, and they will be taken over in the name of the people to be democratically owned and controlled for the benefit of the whole community. And that's all for to-day, Hyam."

W. T. H.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER.

Forward (July 9th) has an article charging Havelock Wilson with carrying on "anti-working class propaganda." This has, of course, long been our opinion also, but we cannot in our momentary agreement with *Forward* go beyond the point of condemning Havelock Wilson. The ground of condemnation used by *Forward* is Wilson's association with Sir Arthur Wheeler, whose firm (Arthur Wheeler & Co.) has issued a circular supporting Wilson and inviting subscriptions for the Industrial Peace Union, of which he is the Director of Publicity. If this circular is evidence that Havelock Wilson is anti-working class, what are we to say of another effort of Sir Arthur Wheeler's, issued this time in support of a cause to which *Forward* is devoted? *Forward* and the parties it supports, the I.L.P. and the Labour Party, are advocates of nationalisation—so is Sir Arthur Wheeler. In June, 1924, his company, a well-known firm of Leicester stockbrokers, issued to its clients a circular letter on nationalisation. Below is a passage extracted from it:—

It is no exaggeration to say that, as a group, colliery shares have been neglected for some considerable time because of the fear caused by the thought of Nationalisation. But this attitude is based upon first thoughts rather than mature consideration. A thorough examination of the actual position soon reveals how little justification exists for these apprehensions.

A short time ago, in conversation, a number of influential colliery proprietors, brought up this question. It was to be expected that these men, who presumably had most to lose from nationalisation, should fear it greatly. Their conversation revealed just the opposite. They were agreed that

supposing it became practically possible, it would be the best thing possible for themselves. They actually looked forward to its realisation.

Again and again, past experience proves that when a Government Department enters into a business agreement with private traders, the latter invariably get the best of the bargain. We, therefore, can assume the same would result if and when the Government took over the control of our mining industry.

Colliery shareholders would receive from the purchaser (i.e., the State), new stock in place of their original holdings. The industry would be guaranteed by the whole taxable capacity of the nation. Hence the new stock would be of the same nature as all gilt-edged stocks, with both capital and interest a Government obligation. The risks of labour troubles and foreign competition would be taken from the present shareholders and placed on the broad back of the State. This, in the main, is the reason why colliery proprietors do not fear nationalisation.

Forward and the Labour Party and the I.L.P. and Sir Arthur Wheeler and his coal-owning friends are all supporters of nationalisation—the Socialist Party alone is opposed to it. Sir Arthur Wheeler supports it because it will be a very good thing for his class, we oppose it because it will be a very bad thing for our class. Why Forward supports it heaven only knows.

H.

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BACKWARD RACES.

LESSONS FROM SOUTH AFRICA.

Socialist Party speakers are continually being asked whether Socialism will have to wait until the black and yellow races have been converted. The questioner usually is very gloomy about the whole business. "What is the use," he says, "of preaching Socialism here in England if all our work is going to be ruined by the backwardness of Japs and Chinese and negroes and other non-white races?" We have for our part never been much perturbed. Capitalism and the development of industry are the necessary and sufficient producers of Socialist thought and Socialist thinkers. The process is slow, but it is universal wherever the capitalist social system extends. We have no fear that any section of the working class in the industrialised nations will suddenly find itself isolated ahead of the main body of the Socialist forces. Most emphatically we do not expect this in England, despite the fact that the general level of political understanding is probably higher here than in any of the Great Powers. We know well enough what slow and painful work it is to build up a Socialist organisation. The vision which distresses our questioners, of a clear-headed, enthusiastic working class in Great Britain panting for Socialism and impatiently waiting for backward foreign persons to wake up and come into line, is hardly in keeping with the facts. If we get on with our job of propagating Socialism at home we can safely leave the workers in other countries to do likewise.

It is interesting to observe, therefore, what encouraging advances have been made by the black workers in South Africa. The white workers organised in the South African Industrial Federation deliberately and persistently refused membership to blacks, and placed barriers in the way of attempts to organise them. The whites, including the South African "Labour" Party, supported the Government policy of maintaining political, economic and geographical barriers against the black races. In Cape Town the Cape Federation of Labour Unions was a little more alive to working-class interests and admitted "coloured" workers (i.e., those of "mixed" race) to membership, although it still interested itself only in those who were classed as skilled workers.

In January, 1919, some two dozen black workers, despairing of assistance from the whites, took on the huge task of forming a Union for all black workers and founded the Industrial and Commercial Union (I.C.U., now the Industrial & Commercial Workers' Union of Africa). It has made great progress in spite of the difficulties placed in its way by the white organisations and by the Governments, and hopes are entertained of spreading eventually throughout the continent.

The position of the I.C.U. was greatly strengthened last year by the decision of the International Federation of Trade Unions to accept its affiliation in place of the white workers' S.A. Industrial Federation, which was all but defunct. The condition laid down and accepted was that the I.C.U. must declare its readiness to link up with trade unions of white workers whenever the latter were ready to adopt that policy. The whites in the newly-formed South African Trades Union Congress were so much taken back by this recognition of the black trade unions that they have now declared their willingness to discuss with the I.C.U. the possibility of accepting all workers, without reference to race, into an enlarged Trades Union Congress. There is therefore a likelihood that at no distant date racial divisions among the organised workers in South Africa may be overcome. At least the white "last ditchers" who cannot tolerate association with black skins may be compelled to withdraw from the T.U.C. and conduct their (fortunately) hopeless fight in isolation. And this promising development will be the result not of white but of black common sense and clear thinking.

A declaration setting forth the policy of the I.C.U. will serve to show that a partial understanding of the class position of the workers has been attained by the black if not by the white unions:—

Whereas the interests of the workers and those of the employers are opposed to each other, the former living by selling their labour, receiving for it only part of the wealth they produce; and the latter living by exploiting the labour of the workers, depriving the workers of a part of the product of their labour in the form of profit, no peace can be between the two classes—a struggle must always obtain about the division of the products of human labour, until the workers, through their industrial organisations take from the capitalist class the means of production, to be owned and controlled by the workers for the benefit of all, instead of a few.

This declaration contains one very serious fallacy, but even so it will compare well

with the majority of foggy aims contained in trade union rule books even in this country. It is a natural mistake for disfranchised black workers, legally barred from effective participation in most political activities in South Africa, to place their hopes in industrial action. We do not doubt, moreover, that experience of the uses and limits of economic organisation will soon induce the black workers of South Africa to see that control of the State is essential to the achievement of Socialism by the working class.

H.

UTOPIA—ON EASY TERMS.

Our masters, despite their cant about our improving conditions, well understand the remote possibilities of the workers being able to save from the meagre portion of their product returned in the form of wages. Inviting the workers to become shareholders on the instalment system is a grim joke. A scheme has been introduced by the Southern Railway with this objective:—

For a workman to secure £10 worth of stock it is necessary for him to pay one instalment of 1/6 and then for 77 weeks 2/6 will be deducted from his pay ("Daily Chronicle," May 23, 1927).

Assuming "regular work," after 15 years' saving against the rainy day, he will have accumulated sufficient to bring him in at (say) 5 per cent. the sum of 2s. per week. It is to be hoped that, even if he and the job last, he does not encounter a heavy shower, otherwise his "rainy day" savings will be a "wash out." Some may protest that large numbers of the workers do "get on." If they do, then why do they not figure as income tax payers? Including the body of professional and other workers who pay income tax as an item in the cost of living:—

The numbers of liable persons paying income tax in the years in question are estimated at 2,400,000 for 1924-25 and 2,300,000 for 1925-26 (Answer given by Mr. Churchill to a question in the House of Commons—Hansard, April 12, 1927).

Here is evidence of the capitalist myth that wealth is becoming more evenly distributed. It shows two extremes. Out of the ever-increasing wealth produced by the working class alone, the wages system means for them that they can never obtain, as a class, more than that which reproduces their slave condition. We have demonstrated it often enough; a capitalist Chancellor of the Exchequer lends additional support to our claim.

MAC.

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

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The Socialist Standard,

AUGUST,



1927

TRADE UNIONS AND THE EMPLOYERS.

While we support any move which will eliminate the existing craft outlook and other barriers which separate trade unionists, we do not make the mistake of supposing that the problems of the working class will be solved by the mere substitution of one great union for many smaller ones. What is of much greater importance is to get the workers to see that capitalism itself is the enemy. The remedy, Socialism, means, not high wages or low wages, but the abolition of the wages system. Trade unions, whether few or many, could not achieve this end, even if the members desired it, which at present the majority do not. A useful corrective to attaching too much importance to a mere change of the form of organisation is contained in a remark made by Mr. Bevin in a speech advocating trade union amalgamation at the conference of the Transport and General Workers' Union.

Nobody welcomed their amalgamation more than the employers, who now met one body instead of dozens, with their internecine friction ("Daily Herald," July 20).

Trade union amalgamation requires nothing more than some small adjustments in the administration of the employers' industries. Socialism means the end of the employing class. Employers, therefore,

under certain conditions, welcome amalgamation. Under no conditions do employers offer such a welcome to the work of the Socialist Party.

THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT AND THE COMBINES.

The *Daily Mail* has for months been conducting a campaign against the sale in this country of Russian petrol on the ground that the oil wells were stolen without compensation from the former British owners. Various oil companies have taken up the cry and we are asked to believe that British capitalists are prepared to forego profits in order to keep their consciences clear. Thus Lord Bearstead, Chairman of the Shell Transport Co. (*Sunday Worker*, June 26th) and the Chairman of the Blue Bird Oil Importers (*Observer*, July 3rd, 1927) have given an assurance that their companies will have nothing to do with "stolen goods." The Chairman of the Blue Bird Oil Importers, Mr. Francis Lorang, told his shareholders:—"I should also like to emphasise strongly that your company is not importing or marketing Russian or the so-called Soviet oils, and has no intention of departing from this policy." It is therefore amusing to notice that the Shell Company have since 1921 retailed 500,000 tons of Russian oil in this country (*Sunday Worker*, June 26th) and that the Blue Bird Motor Company, of which Mr. Francis Lorang is also Secretary and Director, imported 3,794,000 gallons in nine months of 1925 (*Petroleum Times*, October 24th, 1925). Apparently their consciences have only recently been stirred to life, or else Mr. Lorang has two consciences, one for each of the Blue Bird Companies; and even if the companies mentioned are not at the moment handling Russian oils, it is evident that some other companies must be doing so, since the import of oils and oil products from Russia for the period October, 1926, to June 1st, 1927, was 245,928 tons, an increase of 184,561 tons over the imports during the corresponding period in the preceding years (*Daily Mail*, July 2nd).

The probable real reason for the change of attitude simply is that the Russian organisation in this country, Russian Oil Products, has itself been retailing oil as well as selling it wholesale, and at prices below those

of the other companies. Their hostility, in fact, is dictated not by "honesty," but by commercial rivalry and the desire to compel a competing company outside the ring to toe the line.

It is more than probable that the British wholesale oil firms and the *Daily Mail* would drop their campaign if the Russians would agree, as they have elsewhere, not to undersell in the British market. They are reported (*Daily Telegraph*, July 5th) to have made such an arrangement with Standard Oil, and at the World Wheat Pool, which held its conference in Kansas City on May 5th, 1927, representatives of the Russian wheat growers "pledged themselves to the aim of international co-operation in the production and marketing of wheat," and Saul G. Bron, head of the Russian delegation, gave an assurance that it was not the intention of the Russians to "injure prices." "Russia will sell at the world price and take her chances with the others" (*Corn Trade News*, May 19th, quoting from *New York Times*). That assurance having been given, no one at Kansas City was spurred on to object to having relations with Russian growers on the ground that the peasants stole the land from the landowners: and the profit-seeking Americans in the Standard Oil group have been able to swallow their distaste for "stolen" oil.

KNOWLEDGE.

The following Books can be obtained from Head Office:—

- Anarchism and Socialism.** Plechanoff. 3/6, paper 1/2.
- Civil War in France.** Marx 2/9.
- Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844.** Engels. 5/-
- Critique of Political Economy.** Marx. 6/6.
- 18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon.** Marx. 3/6.
- Evolution of Property.** Lafargue. 3/6, limp 1/6.
- Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.** Engels. 3/6.
- Poverty of Philosophy.** Marx. 6/6.
- Revolution and Counter-Revolution.** Marx. 3/6, limp 1/6.
- Social and Philosophical Studies.** Lafargue. 3/6.
- Socialism: Utopian and Scientific.** Engels. 3/6, limp 1/6. *Postage extra.*

NEW PAMPHLET.

We are proposing to publish a new pamphlet, but we cannot do so until we have the money. If we print 20,000 copies the cost will be in the neighbourhood of £100. We ask, therefore, for donations. As soon as we get sufficient to justify giving the order to our printer we shall be pleased to proceed.

MATERIALISM v. SPIRITISM.**A FURTHER REJOINDER AND OUR REPLY.**

Dear Comrade,

If my mentality be, according to J. Fitzgerald, "peculiar," his must surely be unique, at any rate in a civilised community, since he considers that to describe the Marxian Theory of Value as an ideal of social ethics, a moral ideal, is abuse of Marx! And one need not be a "capitalist" to see the inconsistency of professing a belief in scientific materialism, and then sacrificing oneself for the benefit of posterity. Men can only be said to believe a thing when they act as if it were true.

I can see that no amount of evidence will make your reviewer believe what he does not want to believe; but I must repeat that the four founders of the S.P.R. were not Spiritists at the time they founded the society, but were converted by their researches. William James, no mean judge of character, says of Myers and his great work: "Heart and head alike were wholly satisfied by his occupation. His character also grew stronger in every particular for his devotion to these inquiries. He became learned in science, circumspect, democratic in sympathy, endlessly patient, and, above all, happy." A sufficient answer to the insinuation that dabbling in such phenomena disintegrates the critical faculties.

Yours fraternally,

ISABEL KINGSLEY.

9, Maybury Mansions, W.1,

June 11th, 1927.

P.S.—Since writing the above I have seen the further letters on this subject in the June S.S.

J. Fitzgerald has apparently forgotten what he has written. He said that certain evidence that was good enough for Sir O. Lodge "would not impose upon a school-child."

The straits to which our critic is put is shown by his dragging in the conjurers. They have been challenged time and again to produce the physical phenomena of spiritualism under the same conditions as the mediums, and they have never done it. Their opinions on the subject are therefore worthless. It is not the objective but the subjective phenomena that have convinced such men as Lodge and Barratt and Myers, the evidence, that is, of the survival of

memory and personality. Why is a conjurer better fitted to judge of that?

ISABEL KINGSLEY.

OUR REPLY.

When in the October, 1926, issue of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, we reviewed Isabel Kingsley's pamphlet on "Materialism," we stated:—

Throughout the pamphlet there are numerous totally unsupported assertions and claims of the authoress that would take a volume to refute in detail.

while further on in the article we pointed out that she:—

Pours out shoals of baseless assumptions, of unsupported assertions, besides indulging in deliberate misrepresentation,

and gave chapter and verse from the pamphlet to prove our case.

The above is the fourth letter we have received from Isabel Kingsley, but in no single instance has she attempted to meet our exposure of her false assertions and deliberate misrepresentations. Nay, more. We have refuted many of her assertions and claims by quotations from the very sources she refers her reader to for evidence, particularly the volumes of *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*. An important point emerges from these facts. Either Isabel Kingsley has read these volumes, and is guilty of deliberate falsification, or she has not read them and is guilty of brazen bounce.

Her first paragraph is empty nonsense. The statement in her second paragraph:—"I can see that no amount of evidence will make your reviewer believe what he does not want to believe," coming from one who has failed to produce a single atom of evidence throughout the discussion, is just a sample of her brazen bounce.

Her remarks on the founders of the S.P.R. are interesting. We said in the March (1927) S.S. that the S.P.R. was founded by Spiritists. Isabel Kingsley, without giving any evidence for her statement, replied that the society was NOT so founded. We proved the falsity of this statement by giving the names of the founders in the May S.S. With all the boldness of ignorance she now repeats her lie in a slightly different form and says these four men "were not Spiritists at the time they founded the society." And her evidence? Absolutely none. Here again the falsity of her assertion can be proved

from her beloved *Proceedings of the S.P.R.*

At the first conference of that society, the President—Mr. H. Sidgwick—stated in his address:—

I say it is a scandal that the dispute as to the reality of these phenomena should still be going on. . . . and yet that the educated world as a body should still be simply in the attitude of incredulity (Vol. I., page 8).

Here we have not merely an admission of belief in Spiritism by the founders, but a protest, to the extent of calling it a "scandal," that any dispute should exist as to the reality of the phenomena. But the President went further. He admitted quite plainly *why* the society was formed when he said:—

I think that even educated and scientific spiritualists were not quite prepared for the amount of fraud which has recently come to light, nor for the obstinacy with which mediums against whom fraud has been proved have been afterwards defended, and have in fact been able to go on with what I may, without offence, call their trade, after exposure no less than before (Ibid, p. 11).

The cat is out of the bag. Faced with the torrent of exposure of the fraud perpetrated by mediums, which torrent threatened to sweep away the remains of the Spiritist movement, these prominent Spiritists tried to save the situation by instituting a show of "investigation" and "research" into the claims made. They had to warn "even educated and scientific Spiritualists" against defending frauds who had been exposed over and over again, though this warning has not saved Conan Doyle and others from still following that course.

The postscript follows the now familiar lines. I have "apparently forgotten what I had written." Then why did not Isabel Kingsley enlighten us on the point?

Her remarks on the conjurers is not only a sample of her usual audacity; it is also an illustration of her massive ignorance. Where are these courageous mediums who have so gallantly issued these challenges? And echo—as Isabel Kingsley fails—answers "Where?" As every student of Spiritism knows, it is just the contrary that is true. It is the mediums who have been challenged and failed to appear. Scores of instances could be given, but a few well-known cases must suffice.

Years ago Maskelyne and Cooke reproduced at the Egyptian Hall the "phenomena" of the "Davenport Brothers" with ropes and cabinet. Readers of *Reynolds Newspaper* will remember that for many

years the then editor, Mr. W. M. Thompson, in conjunction with Mr. Maskelyne, had a standing challenge to reproduce the phenomena of any "medium," but the challenge was never taken up. Mr. Labouchere, editor of *Truth*, placed a £1,000 note inside an envelope, sealed it, and offered the contents to any medium or clairvoyant who could read the number on the note. No one ever read it. Some of our readers will remember a notorious case in 1901, one of the filthiest that ever disgusted a judge and jury, where one of the leading defendants was known in her "Theocratic" circle as "The Swami." This angelic creature, who received seven years' penal servitude for "aiding and abetting the commission of rape," had previously been a Spiritist medium in America, where she had been convicted of attempting to defraud a Mr. Marsh out of certain property by means of messages from the "Spirits." Mr. Marsh believed in it, but some of his relatives—no doubt "gross materialists"—brought Ann Diss Debar (as she was then known) into court. She was not the only one they brought. They created a sensation by suddenly bringing into court the celebrated conjurer, the late Carl Hertz, who, in broad daylight and not two feet away from Mr. Marsh, produced messages just as the medium had done. Miss Debar, when she saw what was coming, snatched the tablet away from Hertz in the middle of the performance, but, to her amazement, Hertz got the message through in spite of her trick. Then he showed the court "how it was done." The full details will be found in Houdini's interesting volume, "A Magician Among the Spirits" (pages 74-75, etc.).

A wealthy Spiritist named Leybert left a sum of money to Pennsylvania University for the purpose, among other things, of investigating the claims of mediums. The notorious Slade, who had previously been exposed in London by Sir E. Ray Lankester and Sir Bryan Donkin, gave a seance of spirit writing on slates. Mr. Kellars, the conjurer, duplicated every trick of Slade's, and then showed how it was done.

In London in 1919 a seance was held under the auspices of the *Sunday Express*, where a "Masked Lady" gave a performance that Conan Doyle described as "most successful and convincing," and as a "clear proof of clairvoyance." Yet the whole thing was a conjuring trick, as was admitted almost immediately after by the man

who arranged the show, Mr. Selbit. Mr. Stuart Cumberland, who was present, has given a full description in Chapter VII. of his "Spiritualism. The Inside Truth."

But what in many ways is perhaps the most interesting case of all is to be found where Isabel Kingsley never looks—the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*. The "great" medium Eglinton had been giving spirit messages on slates similar to Slade. Dr. Hodgson arranged with a young conjurer named S. J. Davey to give a set of seances duplicating Eglinton's "phenomena." Certain Spiritists who had seen Eglinton were invited to attend and give a written record of what they saw. They all agreed that the seances were duplicates of Eglinton's, and all genuine. When the trick was announced the Spiritists claimed that Davey was really a medium who would not admit the fact!

Isabel Kingsley's last remark on Oliver Lodge being convinced by "subjective" phenomena, while, as usual, contrary to the facts, shows the danger people run who use terms they do not understand. Used in this connection her statement is idiotic nonsense.

J. FITZGERALD.

In view of Miss Isabel Kingsley's failure to give evidence and authority for her assertions and claims, we do not feel that any useful purpose would be served by allowing more space for the repetition of these assertions.—ED. COMM.

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CHINA: ANOTHER CHAPTER.

"How vile a thing is the abstract noun. It wraps a man's thoughts round like cotton wool." Sir Arthur Quiller Couch here states a truth which has yet to be perceived by the motley crowd of followers and leaders who make up what is known as the "Labour Movement." Liberty is an abstract noun, and China is at present being devastated by the worshippers of that nebulous and seductive word. Liberty, and Justice, Equality and Fraternity, mean all things to all men. They are on every lip except the Socialist's. We do not fight for justice, but for the property, the means of producing wealth, now owned by the capitalist class. Every one of the numerous factions in China has liberty emblazoned on its banner and each interprets it, consciously or unconsciously, to square with the material interests of the class it represents. The Chinese workers, with that sublimely silly devotion to the fatherland owned by their exploiters which characterises the working class everywhere, cheerfully offer themselves up as cannon fodder in the armies of all the contending feudal, peasant and capitalist rivals. They will fight and die in any cause but their own. It can be said in their defence that they are too inexperienced to know that it is unsafe to trust to the gratitude of governing classes, when gratitude conflicts with class interests. A slave-owning class will be kind, but it will not free its slaves. There is no such excuse for the European Communists and others who still cheer the Chinese workers on to suicide in the cause of illusory national independence.

First they gave their approval to Chiang-kai-Shek. He and his backers were going to liberate China. Then Chiang cut off the heads of his Communist followers and smashed up the trade unions, and was indignantly denounced as a traitor. Then Feng (the "Christian" general) was the man for a few months, until they found him out as a "traitor" too. Feng, it appears, really belongs to the camp of the "liberal counter-revolution," and is hand-in-glove with wicked Chiang. So at least says Bukharin (*Sunday Worker*, July 3rd). Their third and best saviour was the so-called "Communist" Government at Hankow. This was positively a winner. "Zed," a writer in the "Plebs," who is one of the enthusiasts for Chinese nationalism, was greatly pleased at the growing

strength of the Hankow Government, and claimed it as a vindication of the position taken up by the Chinese Communists (July, 1927). It is doubtless comforting to be "vindicated," especially for "Zed," who is sufficiently far from Hankow not to have to back his opinions by action. Unfortunately many of the Chinese Communists will never know how their policy was vindicated because the "Communist" Government of Hankow has cut off their heads. The *Manchester Guardian's* correspondent reports (July 19th) that 4,000 executions of trade union and peasant leaders have taken place. Wise after the event, the Executive Committee of the Communist International now issues orders to the Chinese Communists to withdraw from the Hankow Government and denounce it as an enemy of the workers' movement (*Sunday Worker*, July 17th, and *Daily Herald*, July 15th).

At the time of writing no announcement has been made as to the name of the successor of Chiang, Feng, and the Hankow Government, so that it is not yet possible to state who will be the executioner of the next batch of Chinese workers. H.

IT PAYS TO SUBSIDIZE.

Playing fields for the nation's children. Pardon—the workers' children. Now that's sensible and benevolent, and costly, too—a million pounds, think of it. Surely our hard-faced masters must have repented, surely the land of Hope and Glory is about to materialise. It has been said of the Socialists that they are very distrustful men and women. They seem to have cultivated the method of the eternal why and wherefore. Yes, it does invariably happen that when highest hopes are raised, that here at last is "somebody that will do something," that they search and supply the why and wherefore from their opponents' own statement. How annoying. Hope deferred again. We are to have playing fields because:—

No surer antidote to Bolshevism and discontent could be prescribed than a proper provision of playing fields for the Nation. . . . Games are cheaper than ill-health; money spent on sport means money saved in hospitals. It may also mean money saved in the elimination of industrial disputes, and the hundred and one distractions which beset a C3 nation (*Saturday Review*, June 4, 1927).

In vulgar parlance, it is money for jam. We do not object, of course, to the capital-

ists giving the workers' children part of "our" country for open spaces for healthy recreation, it becomes to them a necessity owing to the growth of industrial centres. It is as necessary, as was at one time, giving the workers education, or the vote. On their own showing it is the cheapest method for them, and even that at the eighth of the cost of a single day's war. There's benevolence for you! Despite all the reforms

and the boasted benefits of civilisation, they cannot prevent the spread of conscious restlessness. Sanitation, trams, electricity, sports, cinemas, all fail to avert seething discontent. Wants and desires of the workers will continue to grow as a result of their increasing knowledge that they prepare for others a sumptuous feast, at which they are the locked out social outcasts.

MAC.

A LABOUR LEADER'S DEFENCE OF CAPITALISM.

The essence of the industrial problem is to realise that business is a collective enterprise, that the divisions between capital and labour should not exist; that workers should be capitalists, and capitalists workers; and that there should be equality in status, if not in function, among all who are necessarily engaged in the common enterprise of carrying on an industry.

It is sheer nonsense to say that an improvement in conditions could not be secured without the overthrow of the capitalistic system. I advocate the setting up of wages boards and industrial courts, but that would be of little use unless the procedure upon which they were to work was laid down and was generally applied.

The above is from the John Clifford lecture delivered by Philip Snowden at Hastings and reported in the *Daily News* (21.6.27).

In these two short paragraphs Mr. Snowden, who has professed himself a Socialist throughout his political career, openly denies the fundamental principles of Socialism, and declares the establishment of Socialism to be unnecessary.

The quotation is an instance of the truth of our assertion that the "Labour" Party is all things to all men. That Labour leaders are concerned chiefly with obtaining working-class support as a means to their own personal advancement. They frame their utterances to suit the views of their audience.

Mr. Snowden's first statement is obviously false. It is only capitalists who engage collectively in business; and that for the purpose of exploitation of the workers. So far, moreover, as they are concerned, as a class, there is no enterprise without exploitation. They own the means of wealth-production and the wealth of society as it is produced. The working-class produces much greater value than is returned to it in the shape of wages, salaries, etc. It is true that here and there a capitalist shows enterprise in an effort to obtain a larger share of the market by pushing some other capitalist

out; but in general it is as true as that night follows day that capital is multiplied enormously by being used in the capitalist way for the production of commodities.

The worker is not collectively engaged with the capitalist in the production of wealth. He is paid a price for his labour-power, and there the matter ends so far as he is concerned. He has no claim on the capitalist with regard to the disposal of the wealth he has produced; nor any guarantee that the capitalist will continue to employ him.

To say, as Mr. Snowden does, "that the divisions between capital and labour should not exist," is merely a pious expression of opinion. The workers know from experience that without organised struggle against the master-class their standard of living would rapidly fall. Mr. Snowden cannot deny this obvious fact; would he suggest that the workers should cease to struggle? If not, then within the present system nothing can wipe out the "divisions between capital and labour" unless it is the conversion of the master-class to the wage-worker's point of view.

Possibly Mr. Snowden had such a conversion in mind when he said "that workers should be capitalists and capitalists workers." If capitalists became workers, however, always assuming their ability to do some form of useful work, they would only squeeze workers out of employment to that extent. On the other hand, the usual capitalist idea of making workers capitalists is by co-partnership, which is merely a more efficient method of exploitation. The directors of those concerns where profit-sharing and co-partnership have been practised have repeatedly asserted that it is a business proposition from their point of view, and gives greater returns to capitalists.

Mr. Snowden might well be asked how it

is possible to arrange for equality of status between capitalist and wage-slave. No matter how essential a worker may be to a concern, he must always be subservient to the owners of that concern. "Equality in function" is nonsense under capitalism. The function of the worker is production. If the capitalist has a function at all, it is possession and enjoyment. "Equality in function" is, therefore, a negation of capitalism; it cannot exist without the overthrow of the present system and the establishment of one where every able member of society shares in the work of production and has free access to the proceeds of the combined labour. The only system that could attain to such freedom is Socialism, which can only be established with the overthrow of capitalism. Yet Mr. Snowden says "it is sheer nonsense to say that improvement in conditions could not be secured without the overthrow of the capitalist system."

It is for him to show the workers how. The reference to industrial courts and wages boards is his only contribution in this direction. Who is to lay down the procedure upon which they are to work, and who is to see that it is generally applied? Obviously the workers have not the power either way. If they had they would not proceed in such a roundabout way to improve their conditions.

In short, all the suggestions raised by Mr. Snowden: workers to be capitalists, equality in status and function, and improvement in conditions, would still leave the workers at the mercy of the capitalist class, because the latter own the means of life and control the real forces in society. While they have that power the workers will remain slaves. Their conditions and standard of living may vary with time and place, but in the main their slavery will become more oppressive and exacting as the system develops.

The only real hope of improvement for the workers lies in their speedy discovery of the source of capitalist power, and their conscious and organised effort to control that power in their own class interests. They must realise that it is futile to dream of making capitalists workers and workers capitalists. The only solution is the abolition of private or class ownership in the means of wealth production and the substitution of common ownership with democratic control.

F. F.

A MAN OF GOD AND HIS "ECONOMICS."

Capitalism must be getting in a bad way when the bogey man from the cloud department has to lend a hand in the political dope business. Between saving souls and saving capitalism, first things must be first. After the professional politician the "Fool of the Family."

In the *Evening Standard* (June 22nd, 1927), the Very Reverend Dean Inge, of St. Paul's, asks, "What is Socialism?" Under this heading he splutters about as much nonsense as will condense into two columns. In order to "mug" himself up a bit upon the "thing," he goes to the anti-Socialists, Dr. Shadwell, Ramsay MacDonald, and F. R. Salter, for information. He learns that Plato and Jack Jones, Sir Thomas More and Tom Mann, were Socialists. In order also that he may show how Marx's theories have been "ludicrously falsified," he solemnly informs you that Marx "was a fierce looking man with glittering eyes and a bushy beard." Whether he ate food or walked upright we are not told. According to the Dean, one of the falsified theories is that of the concentration of capital, with the consequently growing antagonism between workers and capitalists as distinct classes. Proof number one is that "no more large private houses are built." How that helps the case after the workers have built the drab and monotonous streets and tenements for themselves, as well as the "large private houses" for their masters, heaven only knows! Proof number two is that "We can no longer distinguish classes by their clothes." No longer! As Socialists we never did, any more than by their faces or their feet. We do, and so can anyone, distinguish classes by the manner in which they live, as buyers or sellers of wealth producing energy. That method gives us the only two classes, the capitalists and the workers. Then we have the well-worn story of the increase of small capitalists. That this is disproved from even the masters' own business publications we showed in the July *SOCIALIST STANDARD*. The Very Reverend Dean being somewhat of an amateur in the game of politics, neatly floors himself in one sentence, thus:—"There has been concentration of management, but this is a very different thing from concentration of capital." Is it? Will he

or anyone tell us how, say, twenty competing concerns can concentrate management without unifying their capitals? Are drapery, tobacco, soap, and other trusts, formed for social intercourse, or more economical working? Does not more economical working mean fewer workers required? Did not the amalgamation of the railways mean more traffic carried with 50,000 fewer railwaymen? (See *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, December 23rd.)

This applies to every large industry. Marx wrote years ago that "Capitalism begets monopoly." Was he correct, or is the Dean? Substituting Hegel's Idealism by Historical Materialism, as Marx did, is considered by this would-be scholar a "trifling" change. Such profound learning can dismiss the corner stone of Socialist economic theory in seventeen words and not one piece of argument. This is how it is done:—"Nothing is now left of the Marxian theory of value. Political economy has finally disposed of it." That's all. "It is greatly to his credit, for he himself hath said it." We ask what other theory explains the value of the mass of commodities that are all sold before they are used? What economist, past or present, has shown a flaw in "Value, Price and Profit"? We defy the Dean to show one. All we get in the way of argument is that "Marx was a poor economist, he was a poor philosopher . . . he is the apostle of class hatred, the founder of a satanic anti-religion." Could a poor village idiot without opportunities of learning make a weaker defence of the system that pampers this capitalist divine? According to his reasoning there would have been no circulation of the blood if Harvey had died a boy, no war if the Kaiser had not lived, no bitter class struggle between the masters and the modern slaves, the workers, if Marx had never analysed capitalist society and shown its cause. Every criticism ever levelled against Marx's theories was met in the work "Capital," where he expounded them. There even the mental decadents of a tottering system are placed in their intellectual category.

Let the Gloomy Dean take his place with capital's great men, the alkali sweaters, the soap boilers, and the Rothschilds. His criticism appears that of a mental pigmy against the work of a scientific thinker who so well rated the puny efforts of their type

to stem the tide of revolution when he wrote:—

On the level, plain simple mounds look like hills; and the imbecile flatness of the present bourgeoisie is to be measured by the altitude of its great intellects ("Capital," Vol. I, p. 527).

MAC.

The I.L.P. programme does not enthuse me. It is neither Socialism, nor even a colourable imitation of it. (Philip Snowden, *Reynolds*, 24/4/27.)

Philip, who for 6 years was Chairman of the I.L.P., ought to know. We have said similar things of both the I.L.P. and their Parliamentary Body, the Labour Party, for years. Perhaps for those who are unable at present to reason from evidence the advent of the Labour Party to office with power, will bring practical proof that both they and the I.L.P. are anti-Working-Class Parties. Workers who care to study the matter now need not wait wearily for disillusionment.

MAC.

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- HULL.**—Branch meetings, Tuesday, at 8 p.m., at the Trade and Labour Club (Jarratt Street entrance). Discussion after meeting. All readers in Hull requested to attend.
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- LEYTON.**—Sec., A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.
- MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park Street, Salford, Manchester.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 7.45 p.m., at 114, Duke St., Stretford Road.
- PADDINGTON.**—Sec., J. White, 95, Southam Street, S.W.10. Branch meeting held on Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores; 306, Kilburn Lane, W.9. (side door).
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5 Welling-ton-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- TOOTING.**—Sec., A. Yeomans, 15, University-rd., Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary 22, Dunloe-ave., N.15. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.
- WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Keneington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

WEST HAM.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

WOOD GREEN.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE
**SOCIALIST
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THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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WHAT DOES SOCIALISM OFFER YOU ?

At present we who are workers are employed by Trusts, like the Soap, Oil or Electric Trusts; by companies not yet combined into Trusts; by Governmental and Municipal bodies; and by private individuals. In each of these cases people who have more money than they require to meet their needs use what is over either to buy shares or to buy what may be called "means of production," that is, machinery and whatever else is necessary to produce something that can be sold for a profit. This way of spending the surplus money is called investing capital, that is, spending money with the object of getting back more money that is paid out.

Nearly everything that we need to-day—food, clothes, and the rest—are produced by an organisation that has capital at its back, and therefore with the object of making a profit. That is why bad food is often produced, shoddy clothes are often made, houses that you can nearly blow over are often built, and the workers who produce the needed goods are paid such low wages that many of them spend the whole of their lives in a state of poverty that often takes away the wish to remain alive.

The Socialist intends to have all this altered. Instead of somebody, or some company, having to buy the machinery and other things before food and clothes can be made, he says, let the land and machinery belong to the whole of the people, and let us arrange things so that some will make machinery, others will plough the land, some will go down in mines, others will drive the trains, and so on. As each took an equal part in making what we all needed,

so each would take an equal part in using what was made.

Now if we had such a state of affairs we would only make the best things we could, and we would make them in the best way. Everyone that could would take his part in making things, so that they would be neither rich unemployed nor poor unemployed. Everyone would take his part in eating, drinking, and wearing whatever was made, so that there would be no one in poverty. As there would be no milkman or baker wasting his time going up streets where milk and bread was already being supplied; no travellers wasting their time trying to get business away from another traveller; no bill posters, printers, and others wasting their time printing and pasting up lies about different kinds of goods; no enemies without or within for young men to waste years in armies, navies and other services in the "noble art of war," there would be no lack of hands to make everything that was needed, of the best material, and in the best way.

Now people will say it is very silly to write in this way, as the idea of everyone working together in such a manner is impossible—each will want to get the lion's share of what is made and do as little as he can. When, however, everyone understands that by not doing his part either in the work or the consuming he is only hindering the producing of things, and therefore, in the long run, doing himself an injury, then there will be, in the main, neither slacking nor greediness. Besides, there will be so little work for each to do and such an abundance of things to be got that these inherited vices will soon disappear. GILMAC.

BUSINESS EXPERTS AND THEIR ECONOMIC BUBBLES.

In the SOCIALIST STANDARD (July) we criticised some statements made in "Business Organisation" (April). We said that the coming of Socialism would dispense with the need for coercive State institutions, as there would be no subject class to govern and repress. To this and other criticisms "Business Organisation" (August) now takes exception. They offer no evidence to show our statement unsound. Their retort is to call it "a farrago of nonsense."

As every student of social science knows, the State did not always exist; it is a product of society at a stage of evolution. Through different forms, its essential character has been a power of coercion apart from the mass of the people. To-day we know it as the Parliamentary State, in which the subject class, the workers, are enfranchised. The State is the executive of the present ruling class (the Capitalists), and it protects and maintains their ownership of property because the slave class politically permit it. Even a Capitalist authority could inform our critics. The Britannica Encyclopædia (11th ed.) says:—

The word state expresses the abstract idea of government in general, or the governing authority, as opposed to the governed.

"Business Organisation" asks:—

In whom would the ownership of the means of Production, Distribution and Exchange be vested under Socialism if not in the State?

If they had troubled to read our object and Principles, they would have seen that Production and Distribution (no Exchange) could only be vested in Society, the whole people, as distinct from the Capitalist few, any other method (State Capitalism, for instance) would still retain private ownership, and therefore class society. Who, they ask, "would organise the maintenance of supplies in this classless society"? These are the business experts who accuse us of talking nonsense! Who organises supplies to-day? The Landlords, the Shareholders, and the Dummy Directors or the Working Class? What the workers now do for idlers, surely with growing intelligence they can do for themselves. It is in politics they are ignorant, not in production. When wealth is no longer produced for profit, i.e., when the workers cease to be exploited, Exchange as a means to realise that profit or unpaid labour will be as

unnecessary as the State. Our opponents do not deny the continued growth of trusts, and amalgamations, but they claim that these ensure a wider distribution of wealth, which benefits the wage-earning class. To explain the growth of the large concern, we evidenced the fierce competitive pace of to-day, the recurring bankruptcies, and the elimination of the small independent Capitalist by the cheaper and more economical methods of large scale production. The way our opponents attempt to refute fundamental tendencies is to charge us with suppressing certain figures which, they say, prove the growth of these embryonic wage-earning "Capitalists." We also confuse "proprietorship of wealth with its organisation." The figures "Business Organisation" quoted in their April issue were those given by Walter Runciman in a speech made on March 18th, 1925, upon "The Distribution of Wealth." Here are their own words and the figures:—

The Socialists, chief among the propagandists of ill-will in our modern state, may be invited to draw what comfort they can from Mr. Walter Runciman's arresting figures of the growth of small investors. . . . There are to-day, he added, over 15 million small investors, chiefly members of wage-earning households, whose total holdings in the Post Office, in Trustee and Railway Savings Banks, National Saving Certificates, Life and Annuity Funds, Building Societies and other Approved Societies, amount to the colossal figures of £1,776,247,000.

There isn't any evidence given that, in the main, these are workers' savings. An individual would appear as a separate "Capitalist" as many times as the number of concerns in which he could have investment. As evidence of working class prosperity, they are, to say the least, unreliable; even a Liberal Economist recognised this, for Professor Clay, of Manchester University, wrote to the "Times" (24/3/25) regarding them. We ourselves criticised them, and quoted Professor Clay's letter in the SOCIALIST STANDARD over two years ago (April 25th). Part of that quotation will be sufficient here. It says:—

Whether the tendency is in the direction of greater equality of distribution or not, progress in that direction has not been great, and what Mr. Runciman calls the stupendous total of £777,834,000 is not more than 5 per cent. of the national capital—not a large proportion to be held by "15 million capitalists." On the other hand, allowing a considerable margin for error, it is probably safe to say that over two-thirds of the national capital is held by less than 2 per cent. of the people. ("Times," 24/3/25.)

In any case, income does not determine a man's social position when we have to deal with class interests. One individual may be independent on an income of £500 a year derived from investment, another may draw a salary, equal in amount, for the sale of services which economic necessity compels him to sell in order to live: the latter is a member of the working class, whether he likes the classification or not. Again, a Capitalist may, and often does, retain part of his former wealth after the weeding out process has deprived him of his former independent Capitalist status, but his troubles are by no means ended. In large concerns a few generally own the bulk of the stock, and the existence of the small investor is an uncertain one, to say nothing of the organised methods of relieving him of his "all." International competition, with quickly glutted markets, litters the industrial battlefield with casualties, otherwise the bankruptcy courts would cease to function.

True, Capitalism has brought into existence a small section of higher paid workers, managers, supervisors, specialists, etc., but they, too, find their struggle and existence as keen and precarious as the great body of their class. The march of time compels the recognition of facts once strenuously denied. Ramsay Muir, a prominent Liberal, speaking at the Liberal summer school on the "Distribution of the Ownership of Capital," drew attention to the fact, "not commonly realised, namely, that in this country there is a larger true proletariat or propertyless mass than in any other country in the world" ("Daily News," 2/8/27). Another defender of Capitalism, Harold Cox, in the "Daily Mail" (26/7/27), commenting on the fact that there are only 2,300,000 persons chargeable with income tax, says:—

That minority is even smaller than the figures of 2,300,000 suggests, for a very large number of income tax payers are paying quite rightly a comparatively small tax. The main burden falls on persons with fairly large incomes who are numerically a minute fraction of the population. . . . More than half of the direct taxes in Great Britain and Northern Ireland is provided by 100,000 people, whereas there are over 21 million electors.

This makes our 15 million Capitalists look "small," about 13 million do not receive enough wealth on which to pay income tax. An analysis of the distribution of wealth, therefore, gives us enormous wealth in the hands of the few, while the

great majority own between them only a fraction of the total wealth, and are consequently compelled to work in some capacity or other to live. The writer of the above (H. Cox) also gives us some evidence of the effects of the worsening of the workers' position. He says:—

In round figures pauperism in 1914 represented 21 per 1,000 of the population, and in 1927, as above stated, just under 40 per 1,000. It is, therefore, not far from the truth to state that the proportion of paupers to self-dependent citizens has doubled since 1914. ("Sunday Times," 31/7/27.)

Certainly a wider distribution — of pauperism. From Gladstone to Lloyd George, from Malthus to Chiozza Money, all have had to confess to the growing contrasts of wealth and poverty. Marx and Engels scientifically explained the cause. Marx did not expect the workers to win Emancipation as a result of poverty itself. He specifically refuted that view. What he emphasised was the relative worsening of the workers' position as a class, and with the consequent growth of class consciousness, the struggle for Emancipation. Capitalism, in its development, is carrying out Marx's predictions. It has swelled the ranks of the workers in proportion to the other section of society. Machinery and modern methods render more and more workers redundant. Wage slavery, high or low paid, cannot prevent these worsening conditions, because the workers' opportunity to enjoy the results of their increasing productivity is denied them by the present outworn system of production for profit. Private property in the means of life allows an idle class to monopolise the benefits, the privileges, the comforts. Disciplined, united, and organised by the very system that enslaves them, the workers will acquire the knowledge that will set society free from the last phase of class exploitation.

MAC.

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WHAT THE LABOUR PARTY WANTS.

In the Labour Press Service (August 3rd) is a critical summary of the activities of the Government during the past parliamentary session. The Conservatives are condemned, and we are given the chief Labour proposals which, because they were "aimed at helping the working classes" were "overwhelmingly rejected by the Government and their Tory supporters."

We need not waste much time over the record of the Conservative Government. They were elected by voters—mainly members of the working class—who want Capitalism and who prefer it to be administered by the Conservative Party. The Conservatives have, naturally, looked after the interests of their own section of the propertied class, and if this has not been approved by those who voted for them, the latter will presumably register their dissatisfaction at the next election.

Now for the Labour Party's case against the Government:—

What is the record of the session as it affects the workers? Firstly, their wages have gone down by nearly a quarter of a million pounds a week. Secondly, scores of thousands of them, having been deprived of their unemployment benefit, have been driven either to the workhouse or to the Relieving Officer. Thirdly, the Government grants in aid of relief work have been cut down by one half, and thousands of willing would-be workers have consequently been turned on to the streets. Fourthly, relations with Russia have been broken off, and many orders for British factories have thereby been jeopardised. Fifthly, the balance of £12,000,000 which stood to the credit of the road fund has been grabbed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and many millions of pounds' worth of employment on road-making has had to be cancelled. Sixthly, several new taxes have been imposed upon the workers—notably on crockery, tobacco, and matches—and all the food taxes have been re-imposed.

This is a formidable-looking list, and to it have to be added the Trade Union Bill, and one or two other non-financial measures.

The Labour Party in the House opposed all of these, and claims credit for the fact that when they were in office wages went up instead of down. Had they remained in office another year they would have abolished entirely the "iniquitous" sugar tax, and reduced the tax on tea.

Now let us examine the value of the aims the Labour Party has set before itself.

First, there is the increase of wages during the Labour Government's term of office, contrasted with the decline this year. The Labour Government began in January, 1924, and ended in October, covering eight completed months from February to September. During those months the average of the Board of Trade cost of living indices was 73 per cent. (approx.) above the 1914 level, as compared with 72½ per cent. (approx.) for the same months of 1923. As a result of this slight rise in prices, wages tended to rise, the nett increase being about £500,000 per week.

The average cost of living index for the 6 months from February to July, 1926, was approximately 70 per cent. above the 1914 level; and for the 6 months ended July, 1927, approximately 67 per cent. In consequence of this fall in prices since 1926, wages have fallen by about £250,000 per week. We see, therefore, that this particular claim made by the Labour Party is an empty one. The purchasing power of the workers' wages was not appreciably different under the two Governments; and in view of the fact that neither of them made any change in the economic organisation of the country, this is as we would expect. The change of Government had no more effect on wages than it had on the weather.

With regard to point number (2) regarding unemployment pay, it is interesting to recall that, under the Labour Government, owing to a tightening up of the administration, many thousands of unemployed workers were deprived of out-of-work pay.

As grants in aid of relief work for the year 1926 amounted to about £6,500,000 (Labour Year Book, p. 88) it would appear from point (3) that the Government has cut down that expenditure by about £3,250,000.

The Conservatives for political reasons broke off diplomatic relations with Russia; the Labour Party would resume them. From the Road Fund, £12,000,000 which might have provided a certain amount of employment on road repairs, has been allocated for other purposes. Sixthly, new taxes have been imposed on crockery, tobacco and matches amounting to a total of about £4,000,000 (Labour Bulletin, May, 1927).

The sugar tax amounts to less than £20 million and the tea tax less than £6 million. These the Labour Government would reduce or abolish. Adding together the various items mentioned, we find a grand total of £45 million which is the kernel of the dispute between Labour and Conservatives. It is assumed by the Labour Party that taxes are a burden on the workers and that they would gain from tax reduction. In fact, this is quite untrue. Even if we assume (which is not always or necessarily the case) that prices fall as taxes are reduced, the workers do not gain thereby, because wages fall correspondingly. In the Ministry of Labour Gazette (July) figures are published showing the movement of prices and wages from 1920 to 1927. Taking March in each year the following gives a rough comparison of the "average percentage increase in weekly full-time wages" and the "average percentage increase in cost of living"—both based on the 1914 level:—

		Wages.	Prices.
1920	...	130—135	130
1921	...	160—170	141
1922	...	100—105	86
1923	...	70	76
1924	...	70	78
1925	...	75	79
1926	...	75	72
1927	...	75	71

As will be seen from this, during the first year wages and prices were both about 130 per cent. above the 1914 level. In 1921 and 1922 wages were ahead; in 1923, 1924 and 1925 prices were ahead; and in the last two years wages were slightly above the price level again. On the whole, wages followed prices fairly closely. The purchasing power of the workers remained almost constant. Remission of taxes, if it caused lower prices, would benefit not the workers but their employers. If prices remained the same, the manufacturers would benefit. If this were not so the employers and the manufacturers of the articles affected would not constantly be agitating for lowered taxes. Taxes are a burden on the propertied class. The struggle is an internal one, each group of capitalists trying to "pass it on" to another group. This is the non-working class issue on which the Labour Party concentrates its attention.

But let us put aside for the moment the question as to who pays the taxes. Let us

suppose that this sum of £45 million is, as the Labour Party says, a burden on the workers. Still, the Labour Party deserve condemnation. They seek the support of the workers to fight out the question of this £45 million. It is the chief plank of the more permanent part of their programme. On it they fight tenaciously, but on the question which matters they are for ever silent. The amount of unearned income, calculated for the purpose of the income tax is about £1,200 millions per year (The National Income, 1924, Bowley & Stamp, p. 47). The Labour Party will put up a strenuous fight for £45 millions, but have nothing to say about the £1,200 millions. They strain at the gnat and swallow the camel. The expenditure on unemployment pay and Poor Law Relief is less than £80 millions a year all told, yet in face of this £1,200 millions pocketed by non-wealth producers, the Labour Party can only charge the Conservatives with failure to spend a few millions on the unemployed.

The Socialist case is fundamentally different from that of the Labour Party. We point to the fact that out of the wealth annually produced by the workers a large proportion is retained and consumed by the employing class merely because they are property owners. Professor Clay states ("Manchester Guardian," Feb. 19, 1926) that 94.5 per cent. of the population receive only 56 per cent. of the national income. This is due to the fact that the means of wealth production are privately owned. The same authority declares ("Daily News," Aug. 2, 1927) that 76 per cent. of the population own only 7 per cent. of the capital of the country, while 6 per cent. own 81 per cent. of the capital. The workers are poor because of the existence of a wealthy class living by owning property. Our aim is to dispossess that class. The aim of the Labour Party is to dicker about a paltry £45 million. If every one of the points mentioned here were to be put into operation by a Labour Government, the workers would still be wage-earners, producing wealth for the propertied class. They would still be poor in the presence of the power to produce wealth in abundance. The choice for the workers is between Socialism and Capitalism. If they choose Capitalism, it matters little whether it is administered by Liberals, Conservatives or the Labour Party.

H.

SONGS AND REVOLUTION.

In the course of our work as Socialist propagandists we frequently come in contact with people who appear to imagine that the bulwarks of capitalism will collapse as the result of much lusty singing of the "Red Flag." No "Labour" meeting is considered a success unless this or some similar ditty is borne upon the night air, with or without orchestral accompaniment. What the arguments presented at such gatherings lack in logic is amply made up for by vociferation. This attitude of mind recalls the legend of the Walls of Jericho falling before the blasts of the trumpets of the Children of Israel. In fact, idealism generally has its roots far back in the magic past, although it serves a very useful purpose to the capitalist class of the present day, as we shall endeavour to show.

The following is an extract from an article in the "Daily Chronicle" of July 20th entitled, "Music; the Life Force," by Dr. Leigh Henry:

The French Revolution was the outcome of a reaction in music.

When Rouget de Lisle wrote "La Marseillaise" he roused the people to such an inflammatory pitch that they rose in arms and overthrew their tyrants, only to create a greater and more powerful one; but it was a German, Theodore Korner, who brought about the downfall of Napoleon by going among his countrymen and singing to them old folk songs and poems of revolt which past generations had handed down.

Dr. Leigh Henry may be an authority on musical forms, but his notions of history are laughable. He might as well ask us to believe that the War and the Allied victory in 1918 were due to the influence of "Mademoiselle from Armentiers," or "It's a Long Way to Tipperary"; but let us examine his illustration a little more closely.

The French Revolution resulted in the triumph of the Third Estate (or middle class) over the feudal nobility, with the monarch at their head. The convocation of the National Assembly, the imprisonment and eventual execution of the Royal Family, the war with Austria, and Europe generally, were simply events in the struggle for supremacy of the bankers, merchants, shopkeepers and manufacturers in the towns, assisted by the lawyers and by the peasantry in the country at large. As this, that, or the other section of the insurgent mass asserted itself, so group after group of

leaders were pushed forward or thrust aside.

All the so-called great men of the epoch from Mirabeau to Napoleon were simply the tools, conscious or otherwise, of the rising class.

At this period, owing to the undeveloped state of French industry, the number of wage-workers in the country was comparatively small, and their political influence, such as it was, fell into the scale on the side of the capitalist revolutionaries. The peasants hankered after the land, and did in fact secure a greater degree of control than they had till then possessed; but the richest estates, including those of the clergy, were seized by the Government and auctioned off to the highest bidders. Thus the poor remained poor. Instead, however, of performing forced labour for the aristocrats, they commenced to slave to fill the pockets of the tax-gatherer and the usurers.

On this basis was erected the First Empire, and the problem of a bankrupt national exchequer was solved. No sooner had they dealt with their feudal enemies at home than the French capitalist class found themselves set upon by the remaining feudal monarchies of Middle and Eastern Europe and the capitalist government of Britain; the former feared the spread of the Revolution, the latter could hardly favour the rise of a new commercial competitor.

Conscription filled the armies of Napoleon as taxation filled his purse. Nevertheless he was idolised by the very peasantry who bled for his glory, both financially and physically.

The "Marseillaise," which inflamed the imagination of the insurgent capitalists, became the National Anthem in the hour of their triumph, and in spite of temporary eclipses, still holds that place of "honour."

That the German folk-songs assisted in stimulating the more simple-minded of the German peasants to enable their overlords to regain their lands and power from the hated upstart, Napoleon, may be granted; but the actual force which mobilised the German armies was the same pressure which every ruling class is in a position to bring to bear upon its slaves. In other words, the musical accompaniment of historical events plays a secondary part in determining their character.

The primary factor is the economic development of the society concerned.

The "Marseillaise" or "God save the King" would be quite unintelligible to the

inhabitants of Central Africa or the South Sea Islands, owing to their totally different stage of development and mode of life, giving rise to different groups of ideas, including notions of musical taste and methods of expressing emotion.

Similarly, the barbarians celebrate birth, initiation, marriage, war, and death with rhythmic monotonies which appear positively weird to the European. They may haunt him, but he would hardly describe them as melodious. The nearest approach to their effect is that of the Church chants, which are little more than modified survivals of the dirges droned out by the slaves in the catacombs of Rome. In the ancient and mediæval worlds, music was practically inseparable from religion, first of the pagan, later of the Christian variety.

Even the lays of the troubadours combined profanity with mysticism; as the bloody sagas of the Norsemen would be incomplete without reference to the gods of Valhalla.

With the grand operatic masters of the 18th and 19th centuries a change is evident. From Mozart to Wagner they all exhibit the influence of the economic and political upheaval which characterised their age.

The rise of the capitalist class was reflected in the musical world by the triumph of the secular principle. The church choir gave way to the stage chorus, which provided an enhancing background for the efforts of individual vocalists.

The destruction of the old village life by modern industry spelt the death knell of the ballad and the folk-song. These mediæval modes of expression have been supplanted by the music-hall ditty, while the negroes of America have avenged their enslaved ancestors by infecting their 100 per cent. American masters with jazz tunes and "spirituals."

This interesting resurrection of the primitive seems to indicate that capitalism has reached the limits of originality in art, just as, on the economic plane, it condemns the masses to an ever-worsening standard of living. To avoid misunderstanding, the writer would add that, while jazz has much that can be said in its favour when compared with the stilted products of the Victorian epoch, it nevertheless represents a reaction rather than an advance. It is a symptom of the decay and break-up of the classical musical tradition, but it gives little indication of what will take its place.

The struggle of the working class for emancipation has yet to make its mark, but when it does it can hardly leave the dance-hall and the theatre as it finds them. As the workers acquire leisure, they will develop their critical faculties in other directions besides that of economics. When they enter freely into possession of the fruits of their labour, they will have something to make a song about. Till then, perhaps, we shall have to put up with the "International" and the "Red Flag." E.B.

LABOUR PARTY REFUSES TO DEBATE.

On July 24th, a Mr. A. Axelrad challenged one of our speakers to debate the merits of the Socialist Party and the South-West Bethnal Green (Divisional) Labour Party. On July 30th we wrote to that body asking for their confirmation of the challenge. On August 15th the Secretary wrote to say that his party "cannot favourably consider" the proposal to debate which was put forward by their own treasurer, Mr. Axelrad. Mr. Axelrad will in future no doubt exercise more discretion, and remember that his party are not prepared to defend their case against Socialist criticism. It is interesting to note that this very retiring Labour Party is not the "official" body affiliated with the National Labour Party, but a branch which has been put outside for its "left wing" deviations. Its presiding genius is Mr. J. J. Vaughan. We have been unable to learn that it differs from its parent body in any respect of importance. Like the National Labour Party, it advocates the reform of capitalism, not its abolition.

ED. COMM.

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1927

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT.**The Case of Sacco and Vanzetti.**

All the world has been stirred by the execution of the two Italians, Sacco and Vanzetti, in Massachusetts, U.S.A. The workers, generally speaking, have assumed their innocence, and have seen in the case the vindictiveness of a ruling class which manipulates the machinery of the law against propertyless wage-earners. Legal circles in this and other European countries have been shocked by the glaring defects of a judicial system which can keep men for seven years in jail, and still, in spite of manifest doubts as to their guilt, contemplate their execution. And hundreds of thousands of ordinarily humane people, who accept the original verdict of the American Courts, and do not think of reading class bias into the case, nevertheless felt impelled to protest against the brutality of adding to the sentence of death the torture of seven years' suspense.

By far the most significant and promising aspect of the tragedy has hardly been mentioned. We refer to the statement made by American newspapers that the attitude of propertied circles who resisted the release of these prisoners was frankly based on the interests, real or imaginary, of the ruling class in Massachusetts. They said, in

effect, that, guilty or not guilty, Sacco and Vanzetti were men with opinions dangerous to the privileges of the capitalist class, and the latter needed, therefore, no other justification for taking their lives. This is naked and cynical class interest, the bold casting aside of the conventional cloak of the law. But we welcome it as a sign of the passing of the whole of the senselessly cruel and ineffective apparatus of "justice," which will have no place in the more rational social order at which we aim. We reject the self-righteousness of the timid nonconformist Labour conscience which mocks the victims of that modern Inquisition, the Law, by enquiring into their guilt or innocence. If Sacco and Vanzetti were "guilty," it would make no difference to our attitude. But it must not be thought that we share the equally vicious outlook of the alleged Communists who sought to justify the recent executions of political prisoners in Russia on the ground that they had been proved "guilty" of some crime or other, and that this was a piece of "stern revolutionary justice" meted out by the Soviet Government.

All this talk of crime and punishment is a relic of barbarism, and should be discarded by human beings laying claim to civilisation. "Justice" is "vengeance," in origin the instinctive protection of primitive peoples against individuals who endanger the community by breaches of accepted custom. In later ages, with the entry of class rule, it became the repressive act of ruling classes against those who attacked their privileges. The human impulse which sanctions the cruelty, the legalised violence and murder of the law, is not obedience to some noble abstract justice, but the animal instinct of vengeance. The infliction of punishment satisfies this primal impulse, and gives pleasure similar in kind both to the suburban Englishman, who likes to hear of criminals brought to book, and to the American mob, drunk with blood-lust, dragging some negro to horrible death by fire. Guilty or not guilty, what does that matter? It does not matter to the lynching party any more than do the moral qualities of the bull to a bull-fight audience, their pleasure is indifferent to such details, and it does not touch the real stability of society. The fabric of twentieth century civilisation is not held together by wreaking vengeance, in the name of justice, on the ignorant and half-witted who commit

BERNARD SHAW AND SOCIALISM.

A few days ago I picked up an old copy of "Bernard Shaw," by Holbrook Jackson, and in it I came across a quotation from a lecture given by Shaw in 1896, which it struck me was worth quoting again before I forgot it, owing to the bearing it has upon Shaw's conception of what Socialism would be like. The need to publish this statement again is the more urgent as there is a tendency, even among many who claim to accept the Marxian outlook, to regard Shaw as the arch-socialist.

In December, 1896, Shaw lectured at Kelmescott House, Hammersmith, on "What Socialism will be like," and his opening remarks, which I am quoting, are taken from the report published in the "Labour Leader" of December 19th, 1896:

My lecture will be very short. It consists of three words—I don't know. Having delivered it, by way of opening a discussion, I will proceed to make a few remarks. The first thing that strikes one in discussing the matter with a Socialist—if you have a critical habit of mind, as I have, professionally—is the superstitious resemblance of the notion your ordinary Socialist has of what Socialism will be like to the good old idea of what heaven will be like! If you suggest that under Socialism anybody will pay rent or receive wages your ideal Socialist jumps on you. If I venture to suggest that such questions as who shall be allowed to live on Richmond Hill, under Socialism, it will have to be settled much as it is to-day, by seeing who will pay most to live there, such an eminent and enlightened Socialist as Mr. Hyndman immediately loses his temper, and retorts that that is a disgusting middle-class idea.

Here you have a view entirely different from that which sees in Socialism a state of society in which the means of production will have ceased to be the private monopoly of a small class of wealthy people, and will have become the common property of all—socially owned. Where there is wages and rent there cannot be social ownership, though there may be those highly developed forms of capitalism—Nationalisation and Municipalisation.

GILMAC.

NEW PAMPHLET.

We are proposing to publish a new pamphlet, but we cannot do so until we have the money. If we print 20,000 copies the cost will be in the neighbourhood of £100. We ask, therefore, for donations. As soon as we get sufficient to justify giving the order to our printer we shall be pleased to proceed.

petty thefts, or on the too-clever Bottomleys who over-reach themselves in the circles of high finance, or even on murderers—what are the latter, anyway, but potential "war heroes" who have killed their man at the wrong time and place?

The emotionalists who gloat over the sickening details of murder trials and executions are a much more potent source of social instability than are the "criminals" who happen to transgress capitalist laws and are found out. If punishment were a question of "deserts," or if it served a purpose commensurate with the harm it does, why not punish these people too, and those who pander to their tastes? The obvious answer is that the remedy lies in education, not in the infliction of penalties. Socialist society will, of course, try to protect itself against anti-social acts. What it will not do is to debase human life and stultify its own efforts by introducing the irrelevant idea of punishment. It will seek primarily to remove the cause, a line which our present rulers are prevented from following by their need to defend private property. How can they, for instance, remove the incentive to theft—poverty—in face of the simple fact that, without the poverty of the workers, there would be no wages system and no profits for the employing class? Secondly, it will recognise that some breaches of public order are inevitable, and are risks which society must accept as it accepts the wind and the rain. To embody brutal penalties in legal codes is no better insurance against them than is the action of the savage who makes an image of his God to protect him against the terrors of nature and then smashes the image when he suffers loss through storm or flood. All he does is to give vent to his disappointment. We are not savages, and must learn not to wreak our rage on unfortunate prisoners whom chance has brought within the reach of the law!

To return to Sacco and Vanzetti—while we do not imagine that the Dollar aristocracy who wield the sceptre in Massachusetts is occupied with the problem of introducing socialism, their refreshing candour on the real nature of "justice" may well serve to interest others in the class motives of that institution. If the Sacco and Vanzetti case brings justice into disrepute so much the sooner will the workers perceive that the time has arrived for its abolition.

THE VIENNA BUTCHERY.

A reader who lives in Vienna sends us the following letter on the so-called "Revolt" in Vienna, which ended so tragically. The letter arrived too late for insertion in August issue.—ED., COMM.

Vienna,
July, 22nd, 1927.

Last year a Russian film called "Potemkin" made the round in Germany and Austria; its main features were a successful revolt of Czarist Russian marines on the battle cruiser "Potemkin," and its sequel in Odessa—the crushing by Czarist soldiers of a people's manifestation of sympathy.

Little did the people of Vienna dream that they would so soon have a real life experience of the terrifying scenes they saw last year from a comfortable chair in a picture palace. And if the numerous English, American and other foreign visitors who stop in this city at this time of the year on their continental pleasure trips, and whom a considerate censor had prevented from seeing the Potemkin film in their own countries, they have now been able to learn and to appreciate Czarist Russian manners and methods in grim reality in the fair city of Vienna, "the city of songs and music on the blue Danube, the centre of art and of culture."

Anyone who, like the writer, happened to be on the Friday (July 15th) afternoon on the beautiful Ringstrasse, could not but become the terrified witness of scenes not one whit less revolting and gruesome than those he had seen in the said film. Police, mounted and on foot, and gendarmes firing into a mass of unarmed and fleeing civilians, screams of falling men, women and children, under a sky laden with the smoke-clouds from a burning building. And a hundred men, women and children are now lying in their graves, a mass grave, as befits members of the working class to which they all belonged; a thousand others left to continue the battle for life with broken limbs and shattered nerves, many of them still in the hospitals at the time of writing, fighting between life and death; two hundred in prisons awaiting trial for lawlessness and incendiarism; such is an

episode in Capitalism's career—the sequel to "Bloody Friday in Vienna."

What had happened? What was it all about? What had aroused this special anger and fury of the powers that be?

Had the poverty-stricken mass of the city's workers suddenly lost their patience and their temper, and broken into the comfortable quarters of the rich and wealthy? Had they tried to ease their and their families' wretched lot by forcibly seizing some of the goods with which the countless stores are filled to the roof tops? Had they made a determined attempt at gaining access to the good things of life they produce and store up for a favoured few? Had the workers suddenly come out of their dens and hovels with the set purpose of establishing themselves in the elegant and spacious garden villas and mansions of the "Cottage" or the "Embassador's quarters"?

Had the sumptuous palaces of the Rothschilds, the Fürst Liechtenstein, and the innumerable other palaces of the city been seized by the "common" people? Had the warehouses been attacked and plundered? Was property in danger? Could it be that the workers marched up to overthrow the Capitalist order and to proclaim the Socialist Commonwealth?

But though the fear of these things, which was stimulated by a general shutting of shops, betrays the existence of great social inequalities—"injustices," if you like—that will sooner or later force a correction, not one baker's or tailor's shop, and not one villa in the "Cottageviertel" was in danger. And even the fact that the scene of that terrible collision between working men and the powers that be was the "Palace of Justice" (the Law Courts of Vienna) does not do more than provide an accidental omen.

This attack, however, of July 15th, silly and stupid as it would be in any circumstances, had nothing to do with Socialism, though the party that pretends to stand for the interests of the working class in this country, namely, the Social Democratic Party, cannot be acquitted of a large measure of the guilt for the massacre of so many working class lives. This guilt lies in the awful confusion which that party

creates among working men and women by identifying them with, and wasting their energies on, all kinds of minor issues and reforms. The workers are dragged into every kind of political fracas, the petty squabbles of the innumerable organisations, and thus become easy preys of Bourgeois intrigues.

Only class-unconscious workers could have been so staggered by the acquittal of the two nationalists who had shot dead a social democratic working man and a boy at Schattendorf last January as to begin a "wild strike" and a march to Parliament with the disastrous consequences that followed.

For let us make it clear that these thousands had come for no other purpose but to protest against the acquittal of the two murderers; they soon found the police, mounted and on foot, confronting them and moving them on in the usual police style, until the sight of the "Palace of Justice," with more police and showers of bullets, provided the signal to a maddened crowd to set fire to the building. In vain did the well-tried "leaders of labour" endeavour to appease the infuriated masses from resurrected barricades, in vain did the Social-democratic mayor himself mount a fire-engine to save the burning building, but—is it necessary to say—after an all-day and night struggle the police and military eventually "cleaned" (as they put it here) the streets.

With a more or less obscure object the Social Democratic Party declared a partial "general" strike. On Wednesday, the 20th, the victims were laid to rest, and now things are "normal" again. The "labour market" is relieved to the extent of the murdered and mutilated workmen, and by an increase of the police force supplied by members of the S. D. Party, ready, as that party always is, to assist the Capitalist class in maintaining and perpetuating the Capitalist order.

The Communists saw in the march once more the advent of the social revolution, though it is not all certain whether they will survive its defeat.

FRANK.

GLASGOW.

Sympathisers in and around Glasgow who are willing to assist in re-forming the Glasgow branch, are asked to communicate immediately with HEAD OFFICE.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS IS THE VOTE THE WEAPON?

Some Questions and our Reply.

Clapham.

Comrades,—I am prompted to ask the following questions after having read article "Backward Races" in August S.S.

First of all, I had better state that I am not an "Industrial Unionist" or an "Anti-Parliamentarian." I agree with the words of Marx that "the workers must first of all acquire political supremacy" in order to control the State machinery for the sole purpose of establishing Socialism.

(1) Yet how are our black comrades to get hold of the State forces if they are "disfranchised" and "legally barred from effective participation in most political activities in South Africa"? Would the S.P.G.B. oppose the agitation of "disfranchised" workers, such as our black fellow workers for the vote, because it was not Socialism?

(2) Does the S.P.G.B. lay it down that the workers can only "acquire political supremacy" through Parliament? I fully agree that this is the only method known at the present time in Great Britain, or in any other country where the workers have the majority of the votes!

(3) Would Socialism be impossible to establish if the workers are without votes? I am not suggesting that the Capitalists have only to disenfranchise the workers whereby making Socialism impossible. That would, I think, not be possible under a highly industrialised country. Am I correct?

(4) When South Africa becomes industrialised, will our fellow black workers be enfranchised by the Capitalists? I am not wanting you to be prophets, but it is a historical fact that, in countries that begin industrialism, the franchise is a necessity for the carrying on of the Capitalist system?

Has the Franchise ever been granted to the workers in any country without agitation?

Yours fraternally,
T. W. C.

REPLY.

For convenience I have numbered "T. W. C.'s" questions.

(1) It is obvious that the black workers cannot unaided gain political control in South Africa against the might of those who govern, backed up, as the latter are,

by the full strength of capitalist Britain. We would strongly urge them to agitate for the franchise, although it is plain that workers who have only just begun to organise, and have had no political experience, are not yet possessed of the knowledge and confidence necessary for the establishment of Socialism.

(2) The S.P.G.B. is concerned primarily and directly with conditions in this country, and our Declaration of Principles is framed accordingly. Speaking generally, however, we may say that the centralised political machinery of the Capitalist State (whatever its name and its peculiarities in different countries) must be controlled by a working class seeking to establish Socialism.

In passing, it is interesting to see how the Irish Republicans, in spite of all their brave words and threats of civil war, have been compelled to enter the Southern Irish Parliament as the only alternative to political extinction.

De. Valera says:—

The alternatives with which the new Free State legislation confronted them were to resign their responsibilities, to dissolve their organisation, sacrifice everything they had built up, or to take the step they took. ("Manchester Guardian," 23 August.)

Here we have a striking illustration of the power of Parliament, in spite of the fact that the Free State Parliament is still in its infancy, and that the Government has only a bare majority of votes. (Of course, the Republicans are as Capitalist as their opponents.)

(3) In the long run, the Capitalist State, in its modern developed form, needs representative government as a means of maintaining stability and carrying on the increasingly complex work of administration. In spite of the post-war fascist movement, there has been no general tendency to limit the franchise. Here and elsewhere the tendency is to extend it still further.

(4) The black workers (in Cape Colony only) did possess a limited franchise, which, owing to their own backward condition, has not been of any particular value to them. Under the recent "Colour Bar" legislation, a new and more limited form of representation is to be given to black workers throughout the South African Federation.

We can fairly confidently predict that, in due course, the backward workers drawn into the realm of capitalist production will be given the vote. It must not be forgotten

that the Capitalists are themselves divided into groups with sectional interests. While there remains in existence a body of disfranchised workers, there is always the inducement to the competing Capitalist groups to add to their influence by a campaign for the extension of the franchise. Instances are numerous. In this country, after the mainly working class Chartist movement had failed to secure votes for the workers, the Radical movement, under John Bright, rallied them. The objects of the Radicals were entirely capitalist, and their working-class supporters were regarded, and were, in effect, simply so many potential "voting cattle," to be thrown into the struggle against rival propertied interests.

In Chicago this year the new Mayor, Thompson, appealed directly to the negro vote (hitherto left severely alone). Thompson won, and it is certain that the bosses of other political groups in America will in due course be compelled to bring the negro into the political arena, however little they may like doing so.

In Kenya Colony, during the heated struggle between the Indian trading class and the British landowners (who were in political control), the Indians threatened to start an agitation among the millions of blacks, intending to use them simply as a weapon against the whites.

In South Africa there has always been acute bitterness between the mineowners, who want to employ more cheap black labour and less white, and the white workers, who thought to resist a lowered standard of living by laws preventing the introduction of blacks into white men's jobs. The Boer farmers, who resented the loss of their cheap black labour by migration to the mining areas, support the white trade unionists. In the great strike and riots of 1922 the mine owners already talked of supporting the claims of the blacks to political equality as a means of outvoting the white workers and Boer farmers, and it is inevitable that one or other of the political parties will sooner or later seek to gain kudos and votes by advocating an extended black franchise.

The franchise has certainly been *extended* without the existence of any strong agitation on the part of those who received it. (So far as can be seen, there is no strong demand for the vote among women under 30 years of age, who are promised

the vote.) Clearly, however, there must be some degree of political knowledge and interest before it would be worth while giving votes. There must, for instance, be sufficient interest to make the newly enfranchised take the trouble to record their votes. What has usually happened in the past is that the struggles of the rising Capitalists for a place in the political sun has communicated some of its enthusiasm to the ranks of the workers underneath, and served to create interest. H.

DO WE SUPPORT STRIKES?

A correspondent writes concerning the attitude of the Socialist Party towards strikes, etc. We print his letter and our reply below:—

Eltham, S.E.9.

Dear Sir,

I see from the "Socialist Standard" that the S.P.G.B. is in debt, which debt was incurred in paying fines for members who were summoned under The Emergency Powers Act.

Cannot you publish a few details? As I understand it, the S.P.G.B. does not believe in the usefulness or utility of industrial action. Surely, therefore, they could not have supported the last strike, or for that matter, any strike, and although I recognise that your members who are also members of trade unions must strike with their fellow workers, to be consistent to their principles they should not take an active part in such strikes. By active, I mean the part of the agitator who, unlike the S.P.G.B. orators who appeal to the reason and could not possibly come within the law, adopt the theatrical tactics of the Communists.

As I feel details of these proceedings would place in our hands valuable propaganda, perhaps you may see your way clear to meet my request.

Yours fraternally,

ALASTOR.

REPLY.

Our correspondent seriously misunderstands the attitude of the Socialist Party. We do not now, nor have we in the past, condemned economic organisation and strikes.

If "Alastor" were a regular reader of this journal he would know that we fully recognise the necessity and usefulness of trade unions under the Capitalist system.

Our criticism of them takes two main lines: (1) that much of their activity is directed to useless objects, such for instance as their support of the Labour Party and other non-Socialist political bodies, and their war-time assistance in recruiting, etc.; and (2) that even where their intention is good, they frequently dissipate their strength or allow themselves to be side-tracked. The struggle to increase wages and improve working conditions, or to resist attacks upon these, are objects which receive our unqualified support, and we therefore condemn every endeavour to weaken the unions by subordinating working-class interests to the so-called needs of the "country" or of the "industry," which in effect mean the interests of the employing class.

Lastly we continually point out that, while trade unions and strikes are useful for certain purposes, they are not the means of emancipating the working class. That—the one question of first importance—can be achieved only by the conquest of political power through Socialist political organisation.

(For further matter on this point, see our Manifesto.)

"Alastor" also fails to understand the nature of "law" and of political control and the powers it gives. The Capitalist class are in political control and—within the limits set by the Capitalist economic system—can make what laws they like and have their police and their judges interpret those laws as they choose. Normally they do not choose to make any political propaganda illegal. During the war, and again during the industrial troubles of 1926, they adopted a more repressive policy. Last year when some of the police were in a state of panic, it became well nigh impossible to hold meetings in certain areas without charges being made. These charges—as was admitted by the Judge at the trial of one of our members—did not rest on the substance of the speech, but on the possible effect of the words on members of the audience, or even on casual passers-by who heard a stray phrase only.

If the ruling class allow certain activities to go on it is because the stability of their system is vitally bound up with representative government. When it suits them they can, and on occasion do, make "appeals to the reason" illegal, and treat them accordingly.—Ed., COMM.

WHAT IS CAPITAL ?

"Critic" writes objecting to a statement made by "Gilmac" in an article, "The Source of Wealth" in the March "S.S." The offending passage was "Capital is wealth used in a way that profit results from such use." "Critic" says that, "Capital is capital whether profits or losses accrue from the use of wealth."

"Critic" also writes the following:—

"The S.P.G.B. argue that the workers pay neither rates nor taxes; that the workers do not contribute to rates or taxes in the prices they pay for food, clothing, and shelter.

"If so, why the rush on the part of merchants and such people to take tea, tobacco, etc., out of bond before the operation of a new Budget." A CRITIC.

ANSWERS.

Question 1: Our critic is too smart entirely, but why did not he quote the following sentence? Let me assist him with the quotation in full:

"Capital is wealth used in a way that profit results from such use. Strictly speaking, capital is money invested."

Of course, from the point of view of a definition, it does not matter whether profits or losses accrue, hence the statement "money invested." The first sentence was intended to be no more than a general statement (which is quite correct) to introduce the substance of the article, "The Source of Wealth," a few paragraphs on profit.

Question 2: "The rush on the part of merchants and such people to take tea, tobacco, etc., out of bond before the operation of a new Budget" is due to their fear that the new Budget may cut into their profits. What this has to do with the payment or non-payment of rates and taxes in food prices, etc., is too subtle for me to grasp. Perhaps our critic will explain at greater length. GILMAC.

WHO INVENTED CAPITALISM ?**A Questioner Answered.****QUESTION 1.**

"To speak of a Capitalist 'System' implies that at some date in history there was a DELIBERATE plan laid down—on paper—for the formation of that system. A plan, in which those who had would continue to own that wealth, while those who had no wealth should continue in that position.

"Who were the people who laid down this plan, and at what date and place was it done? What is the name of the document, and is it to be seen or obtained?" "CURIOUS."

ANSWER.

It seems to me that the author of this question is trying to be funny. If so, then I would recommend him, before making such facetious remarks, to glance at a dictionary and find out the meaning of the commonly used word he is writing about.

A "system" is, any assemblage of things forming a regular and connected whole. The name given to such a system depends upon outstanding features of the things under consideration. For instance, we find the immediate heavenly bodies acting upon each other according to a certain order, forming a connected whole, the first of which is the sun—we call this order the solar system. We look into society at different periods and find different social forms, each as a connected whole having as outstanding features certain economic arrangements. At one time it is the exaction of dues in place of military service by the owners of land—the feudal dues of the feudal system; at another time it is the ownership of the wealth produced by virtue of the investment of capital—as in the capitalist system.

Particular social systems are not necessarily laid down beforehand, one grows out of another owing to the development of a new form (or a latent form) in the older system. When the new form grows to such proportions that its further development is seriously hampered by the system suited to the older form, then a revolution takes place and the old system is swept away, giving place to the new. Within the feudal system, production for sale was originally a relatively minor economic form, but owing to various agencies, among them the discoveries that opened up a world market, production for sale brought into its circle of influence practically the whole of society in given countries, and those engaged in this sphere found they were constantly coming up against the laws and arrangements of feudalism. First in England and then in France, a successful effort was made to destroy the old shackling forms and remodel society according to arrangements suited to the new. Social philosophers in England and in France, prior to the revolutions, laid

down very definitely "deliberate" plans "on paper" of what the new order should be like, and if "Curious" is sufficiently interested to read some of those plans, he could do worse than read "Political Thought in England from Locke to Bentham," by Harold J. Laski, in the Home University Series. GILMAC.

A. Yates (Hanley).—Will reply next issue.

F. L. Rimington (Leicester).—Your letter and reply crowded out of this issue.—Ed., COMM.

THE COMMUNIST MIXTURE.

Mr. Saklatvala, the only Communist M.P., recently added to the humour of life by calling a public gathering of prominent members of the Labour and Conservative parties and idle society dames to witness the mumbo-jumbo ceremonies connected with the initiation of his children into the Parsee faith. This drew down on him the indignant censure of the Communist Party, on the ground that Saklatvala's action was contrary to Communist principles, and set a bad example to other party members.

This, however, is not the only case of its kind affecting members of the Communist Party. Francis Maynell, a prominent Roman Catholic, was Editor of the "Communist." Larkin still boasts of his faithful service to the Mother Church, and it is not long since Miss Isobel Kingsley was advertising in the "Workers' Weekly" asking fellow Communist members who were "idealists" and rejected the Materialist Conception of History to join her in forming a group inside the Communist Party.

A Leaflet just issued by the C.P.G.B., with the title "Has Communist Expulsion Helped," deals with the relations of that party with its fellow reformists in the Labour Party. It is interesting to learn from this that "It is false for anybody to accuse the Communist Party of favouring a revolutionary coup d'état by a minority of the working class; we are, and have always been, in favour of utilising existing Governmental machinery to the limit of its possibilities." As has been shown by copious quotations from official Communist publications, the Communists certainly have advocated precisely this thing. But if their

present statement is correct, in what way do they now differ from the I.L.P. and the Labour Party?

In the past the C.P.G.B. have, at least in this country, claimed to stand for the working class. It appears they are now preparing to drop this. "We do not say that the Labour movement should have no message for the middle class. We do not say that it should refuse to fight for the demands of certain sections of the middle class, but what we do say is that it should put the demands of the middle class alongside those of the workers, fighting for them both, and not water down the workers' demands to appeal to the middle class prejudices."

Will the Communists now explain what is the middle class, and how the aims of non-workers can be reconciled with the abolition of private ownership and all forms of property income? H.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Readers are asked to watch for handbills advertising a debate between the S.P.G.B. and the North Battersea Constitutional Association, which is expected to take place on SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2nd, at Battersea Town Hall.

**S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS
LONDON DISTRICT.**

Sundays: Finsbury Park, 6 p.m.
Clapham Common, 6 p.m.
Victoria Park, 4 p.m.
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.
Paddington, Prince of Wales, 11.30 a.m.
Bethnal Green, opposite Salmon and Ball, 7.30 p.m.
Tooting, Church Lane, 7.30 p.m.

Mondays: Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.
Becontree, Burnside Road, and Green Lanes, 8 p.m.

Wednesdays: Hackney, Paragon Rd. and Mare St. 8 p.m.

Fridays: Clerkenwell, Almeida St., Upper St., N., 8 p.m.
West Ham, Water Lane 8 p.m.
Leyton, James Lane, High Road, 8 p.m.

HANLEY BRANCH MEETINGS.

Sundays: Hanley, Market Square, 7 p.m.
Burslem, St. John's Square, 7 p.m.

BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Rd. Discussion second Thurs. in month.
- BECONTREE.**—Sec., S. Cash, 32, Greenway. Public invited.
- BETHNAL GREEN.**—Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m., at 2, Co-operative Buildings, 361, Bethnal Green Rd., E.2. Sec., D. Jacobs, at above address.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec. E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st & 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.
- CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Sec., at above address.
- EAST LONDON.**—Sec., A. Jacobs, 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.
- EDINBURGH.**—Sec., 15, Barclay Place, Edinburgh.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Saturdays, 7 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare Street, Hackney. Discussions after Branch Business. Sec. at above address.
- HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock St., Hanley, Staffs.
- HULL.**—Branch meetings, Tuesday, at 8 p.m., at the Trade and Labour Club (Jarratt Street entrance). Discussion after meeting. All readers in Hull requested to attend.
- ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sister-rd., Holloway, N. Sec., M. Baker, 18, Orpingley-rd., N.7.
- LEYTON.**—Sec., A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.
- MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park Street, Salford, Manchester.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 7.45 p.m., at 114, Duke St., Stretford Road.
- PADDINGTON.**—Sec., J. White, 95, Southam Street, W.10. Branch meeting held on Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn Lane, W.9. (side door).
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- TOOTING.**—Sec., A. Yeomans, 15, University-rd., Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary 22, Dunloe-ave., N.15. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.
- WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

WEST HAM.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford-rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

WOOD GREEN.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No. 278. Vol. 24.]

LONDON, OCTOBER, 1927.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.

THE IRISH ELECTIONS. MORE COMMUNIST TRICKERY.

Exit China, enter Ireland! With the complete failure of all their anti-working-class policies in China, and the consequent passing of enthusiasm about Chinese troubles, the Communist Party of Great Britain now turns its attention to Ireland. It has been offering the Irish workers advice in order that the latter may know how to manage affairs in the very successful way that the Communists have managed their own affairs over here, and Chinese affairs in China.

In the recent Irish elections there have been numerous parties soliciting the support of the electorate, and a working-class organisation taking upon itself to offer advice would naturally make it its duty to point out clearly which party, if any, had a policy which is deserving of working-class support. Given the existing political confusion, clearness is above all to be aimed at by those who would teach the workers how to emancipate themselves. How, then, did the Communists perform this elementary duty?

THE OPPOSITION PARTIES.

There were several opposition parties:—

- (1) The Republicans (De Valera);
- (2) The National League (Redmond);
- (3) The Labour Party (Johnson);
- (4) The Irish Worker League (Larkin);
- (5) The Workers' Party of Ireland (Communist Party).

Of these, the first two, like the Government Party (Cosgrave), are frankly Capitalist, while the remaining three make special appeal to the workers.

In the *Sunday Worker* (September 11th) edited by the Communist W. Paul, is an article by another Communist, Jack Car-

ney, weighing up the two largest parties led by Cosgrave and De Valera respectively. He dismisses them as the representatives of two Capitalist groups, and says "Behind De Valera stands the American banker, and behind Cosgrave the British financier."

They differ, like our Liberal and Tory parties, over the question of tariffs. The Capitalists behind De Valera use the catch cries of Republicanism to further their own interests by means of "high protection," De Valera admitting in an interview (*Manchester Guardian*, June 27th) that this would, in his opinion, mean a "less costly standard of living" for the workers. He boggled at the words "lower standard of living," but a careful and repeated reading of his subtle attempt to differentiate fails to disclose any difference whatever between the two descriptions of his party's aim.

The Labour Party's policy, as outlined by its leader Johnson, in *The Irishman* (May 14th, 1927), has no more to offer the workers than has De Valera's. They, like the Republicans, advocate protection and lower taxes on capital invested in Ireland, and while asking for numerous trivial demands which are on the programmes of all parties, such as "the provision of employment" for the unemployed, they even go out of their way to repudiate expressly the nationalisation of the land, factories, etc. As the *Worker's Life* (Communist Party of Great Britain) correctly points out, "The (Irish) Labour Party has degenerated into a Liberal Party pure and simple" (September 9th).

It is interesting to recall also that immediately after the last election in June of this year, the Labour Party first offered to support the Government Party, and their offer

being refused, then secured the support of the Republicans and the National League in a tricky manoeuvre which was to have elevated them to office. This shows how little in principle separates them from these other three avowedly Capitalist parties.

Similarly, just before the last election, De Valera's Republicans and Cosgrave's party demonstrated their fundamental agreement on the maintenance of Capitalism by mutual gestures of reconciliation. Thus, in reply to Mr. Cosgrave's "I am prepared to forgive and forget," Mr. Sean Lemass, for the Republicans, said, "We are prepared to forgive If he wants a political truce with Fianna Fail he can have it to-morrow." (*The Republic*, September 17th). A step further towards reconciliation took the form of a joint meeting of party leaders immediately following the election.

The Workers' Party of Ireland (Communist) has aims exactly like those of the English Communists. The Irish Workers' League was formed by Larkin immediately before the election, and has a policy indistinguishable from that of the Workers' Party of Ireland.

TELLING THEM HOW TO VOTE.

We have already mentioned that in the eyes of the Communists the Irish Labour Party is "Liberal, pure and simple." Yet in face of this the *Worker's Life* (September 9th), and the Workers' Party of Ireland (Official Statement "How to Vote") tell the Irish Workers to vote for Labour candidates. They do not explain why workers should support a "Liberal Party" which calls itself "Labour" and not support a "Liberal Party" which calls itself "Liberal."

Gallacher, Stewart and Saklatvala, members of the Communist Party of Great Britain, were over in Ireland officially supporting Larkin's "Irish Worker League" (*Irish Independent*, September 13th), which was also supported by De Valera's Republicans. (See *Sunday Worker* September 11th). Thus we had the Communists and the Republicans associated in support of Larkin despite the fact that the Communists themselves admit that "Behind De Valera stands the American banker" (*Sunday Worker*, September 11th). Thus Mr. E. Cooney (Republican candidate) told his supporters, "I hope, after voting Fianna Fail that you will give your next preference

to Jim Larkin, for he stands for militant Irish Nationalism just as much as Fianna Fail." (*Irish Independent*, September 13th.) In return, Larkin declared, "We are appealing to the workers to vote for Fianna Fail" (*Sunday Worker*, September 11th).

But although Larkin's Communist supporters were telling the workers to vote for the Labour candidates, Larkin himself admitted that his object was primarily to down the Labour Party, and particularly its leaders. It was known in advance that he was almost certainly debarred from taking his seat.

He said:—

We have got them on the run. . . . I can promise you that next Thursday night Johnson's political career is closed in Ireland. . . . We are out fishing in dirty waters. We may not catch much salmon, but . . . we are going to drown three political worms, maybe more.—(*Sunday Worker*, 11/9/27.)

To make confusion worse confounded, the Workers' Party of Ireland (Communist) which supported Larkin and ran no candidates of its own, not only told the workers to support Labour candidates, but also told them to vote for Republicans and National League candidates. Thus, in Dublin City (North), it supported a list of 4 Republicans, 2 Labour candidates, 1 Larkinite, and 1 Redmondite, and in Dublin South it supported 4 Republicans, 1 Labour candidate, and 1 Larkinite ("How to Vote"). This same leaflet "How to Vote," while supporting the Republicans, says, "The Republican Party is equally as capitalistic in its outlook, representing the smaller Capitalist elements."

Last of all, it actually declares in the first and last lines respectively of the same paragraph, "Therefore vote against the Free State candidates," and "only give your last votes to the Free State candidates."

AN UNHOLY MESS.

If, therefore, any unfortunate Irish worker listened to his Communist advisers, he would have been told (1) by Larkin, to vote for him and for the Capitalist Republicans (De Valera), and to help smash Johnson; (2) by the Irish Worker Party to vote for Larkin, for Johnson, for the National League, for De Valera, and lastly for the Cosgrave (Government) Party; (3) by Saklatvala and company, to vote for Larkin and the Labour candidates, although Larkin's party and the Labour Party are alleged by

Larkin to be irreconcilable enemies, and although they themselves know the Irish Labour Party to be "Liberal pure and simple."

This is what they call practical politics!

CAPITALISM TRIUMPHANT.

One did not need to be a prophet to know that the election results would show Irish Capitalism triumphant, and since no Socialist candidate was in the field it was equally easy to foretell that none would be elected. Much preparatory work has yet to be done before such an event can be considered within the bounds of possibility.

In conclusion, a little comic relief is provided by contemplating Larkin. Although his chequered part shows him to be one of the most audacious charlatans who have ever preyed on the Labour Movement in any country, there is one person at least who has a good opinion of him, that is Larkin. In his election address he writes modestly about himself:—

"In one year alone James Larkin (Jim Larkin) forced the employers to increase wages to the extent of £127,000 in one year."

During the election, much use was made by Larkin of the name of Connolly. It is therefore to the point to recall Connolly's considered judgment of Larkin. In a letter to William O'Brien, dated May 24th, 1911, Connolly wrote:—

Do not pay any attention to what Larkin says the man is utterly unreliable—and dangerous because unreliable.—(see p. 162 of "Report of Actions in the Law Courts," published by Irish Transport and General Workers Union, 1924.)

Larkin is no less dangerous now than then, a fit companion for the muddle-headed British Communists who support him and his Capitalist Republican allies.

H.

NOW ON SALE.

MANIFESTO

OF

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Sixth Edition—With New Preface.

Price 2d. Post Free, 2½d.

An Armoury of facts exposing the Labour Party, I.L.P. and similar "Labour Organisations."

LABOURISM.

A CONFESSION OF FAILURE.

Mr. A. M. Thompson of the *Clarion*, was one of the founders of the Labour Party. He has, throughout a long career, consistently opposed the formation of a definitely socialist organisation striving for Socialism, on the specious plea that the workers could not afford to sacrifice possible present gains for the sake of a solution of the whole problem of their poverty through a Socialism which could not be obtained immediately.

"Half a loaf is better than no bread"—so declared Thompson and his fellow Labourites. We opposed that view then, as we do now, on the plain ground that people get what they fight for. If they fight for reforms, they get reforms but not Socialism. Whether reforms are worth struggling for is another point. Experience always testifies that they are not.

The miners have suffered as many reforms as any body of workers, and are still asking for more. Yet Mr. Herbert Smith, their president, says this: "Bad as is the miners' position, the worst is not yet Not since 1885 has there been anything to equal it." (*Daily Herald*, June 6th.)

And Mr. Thompson is reduced to the following abject confession of the failure of his and the Labour Party's policy: "But the way to realisation is still to seek, and after nearly forty years of sowing, I begin to wish for delivery of at least a part of the 'goods'." (*Manchester Guardian*, June 22nd, 1927). But even if Mr. Thompson is now convinced that his policy has not justified itself, he is not without hope. Since not even "part of the goods" have been delivered, and since he does not think that "we shall achieve these results by perpetuating the Government of Britain by men like Lord Birkenhead, Earl Winterton, Sir Douglas Hogg, Sir W. Joynson-Hicks, and Mr. Neville Chamberlain," his very original remedy, after 40 years' experience, is a Liberal-Labour election "deal"! Truly, half a loaf is better than no bread, but if the energy devoted in 40 years to the scramble for the half-loaf had been differently directed, we would by now have had the whole loaf—Socialism; as it is, we have nothing. In view of the weird stuff which the *Clarion* palmed off as "Socialism," it is not surprising to be told that "when we started the *Clarion*, none of us had ever read Karl Marx."

H.

THE WEALTHY WORKERS!

The concentration of vast capital into the hands of a continually decreasing number of Capitalists, accompanied by more efficient methods of production, swells to an enormous extent the wealth of this class. While, on the other hand, this development brings with it a more intense form of exploitation, greater insecurity, unemployment, and poverty of the wealth producers. The result is that, as Capitalist society develops, the distinction between the two classes becomes wider and clearer; and the opposition of interest more intense.

These facts are having a powerful influence on the minds of the workers, and are slowly but surely preparing them to accept the principles of Socialism.

Having progressed so far towards an understanding of their class position, they become less easy to deceive. Consequently the older political parties, who openly defend the present system of society, and claim that there is no alternative, can no longer command the support of an overwhelming majority of the workers as they did in the past. Hence the need, to the Capitalist class, of a political party that can secure the support of this discontented section, by criticising the system, and when necessary expressing sympathy towards Socialism, and that can, at the same time, be relied upon to maintain Capitalist society.

This is the cause of the rapid growth of the Labour Party. Experience and Socialist propaganda, however, will complete the lesson the workers have commenced to learn. They will then realise the futility of fighting for anything but Socialism, and will join the Socialist Party, that has Socialism, and that alone, for its object.

The awakening of the workers to their class position is, to the Capitalist, a serious affair, and it is the endeavour to delay that understanding which prompts them to publish articles, such as this from which we quote:—

According to most Socialist, and all Communist, writers and speakers this country is divided between the "capitalists" and the "workers," that is to say, the Haves and the Have-Nots. They try to delude people into believing that practically all the capital is in the hands of a relatively small minority; the rest of the community consisting of the toiling but unpropertied masses. Nothing could be a more ridiculous travesty of the facts. The truth is that a very large proportion of the people of this country, including the workers with hand or brain, are owners of capital.—(The "Daily Mail," 11/6/27.)

It will be most gratifying to the workers to realise that, after all, their poverty is only a delusion. But what a pity the million miners did not know that they had such resources to draw from when they were locked out. And why did King Fuad of Egypt feel it incumbent on him to donate £1,000 to the London poor during his recent visit?

Another point that is often raised is the increase in the number of small investors. This appears at first sight to contradict the assertion that capital is concentrating into fewer hands. But upon closer examination it will be seen that the contrary is the case, and the increase in small investments is actually an effect of that concentration.

In the first place, this increase only applies to money invested in savings banks or public companies, and takes no account of capital held by people who use it as private traders. Consequently, if they are compelled to sell their business and invest the money in one or another of the concerns mentioned, that would be registered as an increase in the amount of capital held by an investor of moderate means. But all that has happened has been a change in the form of their property. Take, for example, a man with a capital of £3,000, and using it to run a private business. He finds his business failing on account of competition from a more powerful competitor. Now, according to the way he acts, we get the following results:—

1. He may see the danger before much harm is done, and be successful in selling his business without any great loss, and transfer the money to one of the concerns mentioned. With the result as above, the transfer of capital would be reckoned as an increase, when no increase had taken place.

2. Assume that, before he is able to sell his business, he shows a considerable loss, and is compelled to accept for it half its former value, viz., £1,500, which he invested in the same way as in example No. 1. Here the result is that there is registered an increase of £1,500 in capital held by people of moderate means, but in actual fact there is a decrease of £1,500 owned by this group.

3. Or again, he may hang on to his business until he is forced out, as a bankrupt. In which case there is a loss of £3,000, but it is not registered as a decrease by these one-eyed statisticians, because a view of this side of the question would be fatal to their case.

If we take the period 1906 to 1926, and consider the rate at which small businesses have either been crushed out or absorbed by larger ones, and they in turn swallowed up by more powerful combines, it is easy to account for this increase in the amount credited to depositors of small means, running parallel with the concentration of capital. The greater the concentration, and the more general large-scale production becomes, the greater becomes the amount of capital that is forced out of the channels of private trade into those of investment. And the fact that a few of the small fry are able to rescue a part of their capital from the share-shark infested waters, and place it in the safest position they know, accounts for this supposed prosperity of the working-class. A delusion which arises, as we have seen, through the competition between Capitalists—the weaker being pushed, at an ever-increasing pace, into the ranks of the "Have-nots."

In face of the trials the workers experience in their struggle to live, such attempts to mislead them must fail. And as the system develops, the need for a change in the basis of society from the private ownership in the means of life to common ownership becomes more evident. When the majority of our class realise this simple fact, they will join with us in the fight to secure control of the political machinery and armed forces for the purpose of establishing what must be the one and only object of a working-class political party—Socialism.

E. L.

A DEBATE

will be held at

THE BATTERSEA TOWN HALL,
(LARGE HALL, LAVENDER HILL)

On Sunday, 9th October, 1927,

between

MR. J. FITZGERALD

representing The Socialist Party of Great Britain, and

MR. G. R. WHEELER

representing the North Battersea Constitutional Association.

SUBJECT OF DEBATE:

"Which Political Party should the Working Class Support—The Socialist Party of Great Britain or the Conservative Party."

Doors open 7 p.m. Commencing 7.30 p.m.

ADMISSION FREE. NO RESERVED SEATS.

SHOULD WE PRODUCE MORE? AN ECONOMIC FALLACY EXPOSED.

As an example of an error which is very widespread, let us take a resolution just passed by a conference of the International Federation of Boot and Shoe Operatives. After urging the different Governments to ratify the Eight Hours' Day Convention, it declared that "in view of the widespread unemployment in the shoe and leather trades, the constant improvement in manufacture leading to increased output, and the decreased purchasing power of the working classes, a further shortening of hours to 44 per week is necessary." This was moved by a French delegate, approved by the British delegation, and agreed.

Now, in principle, of course, we support the Eight Hours' Day. And we should welcome a reduction of the working week to 44 hours or any lower figure, provided it was consistent with maintaining production. But that proviso is vital; for less production means less wealth—in other words, more poverty; and we want no increase of poverty to-day. What the world suffers from, is not that it has too many commodities, but too few. There are not enough good things to go round; and in proportion as production is diminished, there will be still fewer.

The right remedy for a congested market is to lower prices and so bring in more purchasers.

The above is from the leading article in the *Daily Chronicle* of August 20th last. The *Daily Chronicle* and other newspapers, concerned at the growing tendency of the workers to attempt to mitigate the evil of unemployment by restricting the output of those who are producing, iterates, and reiterates the statement that such a policy is an "error." Undoubtedly many workers believe their tale; for it certainly is a very plausible yarn that cheaper goods mean greater consumption, greater demand, less unemployment and higher wages. Plausible as the argument is, its shallowness is revealed by a little thoughtful examination; and invariably the hirelings of the Press undermine their case by the very clumsiness of their attempts to bolster it up.

Take, for instance, the statement that "less production means less wealth—in other words, more poverty": less wealth does not necessarily mean more poverty—that depends more upon the distribution of the wealth than its amount. Again, note the assertion that "there is not enough good things to go round," and the contradictory implication contained in the claim that "The right remedy for a congested market is to lower prices. Not enough good things to go round, but enough to congest the market! What absurdity!"

However, the purpose of this article is not to deal with the quality of the argu-

ments which are thought good enough (and often are good enough) for working-class beguiling, but to expose the fallacy of the statement that the solution to the poverty "problem" is greater output by the workers, resulting in cheaper commodities, increased consumption, less unemployment, and finally higher wages. All these have been dealt with time and time again in THE SOCIALIST STANDARD during the last twenty-three years by scientific argument; the writer now proposes to try the effect of a little simple arithmetic.

Let us take the employed workers in a community as one thousand; let us reduce their varied products to a common form, which we will call "Wares," and finally let us suppose that the price of each of those wares is £1, and it is the product of one man's labour for a day. We have the following condition of affairs as the result of the day's effort:—

Workers: 1,000; Wares: 1,000; Price: £1,000.

Now suppose that from some cause each worker doubles his day's output, the figures then would be:—

Workers: 1,000; Wares: 2,000; Price: £2,000.

The number of the wares had doubled, and the price of the total output has doubled; but the price of each commodity remains the same! Some puzzle? No. The simple explanation is that gold is included in the products of labour, and being in common with other commodities, produced in half the time formerly necessary, the old ratio is maintained; that is to say, prices are unchanged. The more intense production has not made things cheaper; the pound wages will not buy more; therefore, there is no increased demand, no greater employment, and no higher wages. So far, the theory of greater production fails at every point. In order to make wares cheaper, our missionaries of harder work for other people must make an exception of those workers engaged in producing gold. The ca'canny, the limitation of output, the antiquated methods, which are crimes in every other field of industry, must become virtues in the goldfields! What economists!

But assuming, like the obliging people we are, that the speeding-up applied to all wares except gold, then the figures would run:—

Workers: 1,000; Wares: 2,000; Price: £1,000.

So, by juggling gold out we, succeed in halving prices for our Capitalist apologists. Now let us see how this affects the "congested market."

If, previously, each worker received 10s. for his day's work, that would be £500 for all the workers. We have, then:—

Wares Produced: 1,000; Wares bought by Wages: 500; Wares left: 500.

Five hundred wares left over to congest the market.

Those who know the pleasures of getting drunk, and the miseries of getting sober again, swear by the old, old remedy, "a hair of the tail of the dog that bit me." The argument holds good in economics it seems, so the remedy for a congested market is more commodities, in other words, more congestion. Well, let us chuck in the other commodities, and halve their price. Figures follow:—

Wares produced: 2,000; Wares bought by Wages: 1,000; Wares left: 1,000.

The result of doubling production and giving the workers twice as many commodities is that the wares left in excess are also doubled, in other words, there is congestion now in both lungs instead of only in one.

Actually, however, this is giving a too favourable report of the patients' progress. The workers' wages as a whole have never had any relation to the amount of wealth they produced. Instead, they have been pretty closely ruled by the cost of living. Even Capitalist henchmen now can hardly deny this, in face of the trouble the Government is at to issue a periodical return of the cost of living, in order that so many employers may regulate the wages of their workers accordingly. If it were true that, as the Capitalist Press claims, lower prices meant higher wages, then every time the returns of lower living costs were published there would be a rise of wages, not a fall. But we know that as the cost of living falls wages fall also. Competition for jobs brings that result about, and with twice the amount of excess wares congesting the market, competition for jobs would not be less keen. So our sum must now be set out thus:—

Wares produced: 2,000; Wares bought by workers: 500; Wares left: 1,500.

You see the fact that the workers have produced more wares does not mean that they require more of them to enable them to live. As 500 wares sufficed to enable them to reproduce their labour-power when

they only produced 1,000 wares, no more would be needed now that they produce 2,000, and they would get no more. Evidence? Every day's history since the industrial revolution is evidence. The fertility of labour-power has increased hundreds-fold—possibly a thousand-fold; but do the workers get more than enough to live on now?

So the result of the workers doubling their output has been that there are three times the number of wares left over on the market. If the way to remedy congestion on the market is by means of further congestion, then we must suppose that the cure is complete.

Of course, we know that a certain amount of the wealth the workers do not consume is consumed by the Capitalist class, but this does not make the matter any better for their theory, as we shall proceed to show.

How many of the 500 wares left over in our first example shall we assume the Capitalist class will consume? If we say 100, then there are 400 left on the market. Now with prices halved, one could hardly look for them to buy more than twice the number of wares, that is, instead of 100 out of 500, they could at most be expected to consume 200 out of 1,500. So instead of 400 excess wares, there would now be 1,300, an increase of $3\frac{1}{4}$ times. The more we assume that the Capitalists consume the worse the case appears. If they consume 400 out of the 500 in the first case, then 100 only are left on the market. With prices down to half, they might use 800, leaving 700, which shows an increase of 7 times. So the matter gets worse and worse.

Well, it's no use prolonging the agony. The workers will find no cure for their poverty in increased production, or, for that matter, in restriction. Their troubles arise from the difference between what they produce and what they are able to consume. Increased production only makes still greater that difference, and hence can only add to their troubles. When the workers are producing for themselves, that is, when they are producing under Socialism, then the greater fertility of labour-power will be an unmixed blessing. A. E. JACOMB.

NEW PUBLICATIONS FUND.

Contributions to this fund are earnestly invited to assist us with the expense of publishing more literature.

PAMPHLETS FOR SALE.

We have been fortunate in securing quantities of seven pamphlets published by the Socialist Party of Canada, and are offering them for sale at the rates set out below. There is, of course, no need to make special mention of the standard works of Marx and Engels. The pamphlet on the causes of modern war contains much useful information with copious references, and consists of articles which appeared serially in the *Western Clarion* (now defunct). "Slave of the Farm" describes and explains the hard and losing fight waged by the Canadian farmer against the organised financial and industrial Capitalists. It is a corrective to the fanciful tales of the Empire boosters and emigration touts.

"Causes of Belief in God," by Lafargue, has not been published in this country in pamphlet form, and will be new to most English readers. It is written with Lafargue's accustomed brilliance.

The Socialist Party of Canada has now ceased to exist, and the pamphlets will not be reprinted in the present editions.

Those we have obtained represent the bulk of the remaining supply. They are excellently produced, of convenient size, and well worth the price asked. All but two ("Slave of the Farm" and "Economic Causes of War") are in the uniform and attractive series known as the "Whitehead Library." As the stock will soon be exhausted, you are urged to make early application.

"Wage-Labour and Capital" (Marx), — pages, 4d.

"Communist Manifesto" (Marx and Engels), 59 pages, 4d.

"Slave of the Farm" (A. Budden), 63 pages, 6d.

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Note.—Postage extra: $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per copy.

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The Socialist Standard,

OCT.,



1927

**CAPITALISM IN QUEENSLAND.
FEROCIOUS LABOUR GOVERNMENT.**

For years we have warned the workers against the danger of Labour Governments. Capitalism can be administered, as regards essentials, only in one way—the Capitalist way. Whether the administration calls itself Liberal or Tory, Communist or Labour, matters nothing to the working class. In our issues for December, 1923, and February, 1924, the position and activities of Labour Governments in different Australian States were fully dealt with. A recent incident should serve to drive home our lesson that Socialism is the only remedy, and a "Labour" Government is an enemy to be fought, not an ally to be supported by those who desire to establish Socialism. The Queensland railwaymen tried to help some workers who were on strike in the sugar industry. The "Labour" Government met this sympathetic action by dismissing the 11,000 railway employees, and was able to force them to desert the strikers and go back to work. Thus Queensland is vindicated as a territory which is still safe for Capitalism.

Three points are worth notice in this little incident. The first is that we see here Labour Government forbidding sympathetic strikes, yet how our own Labour Party has howled because the Conservatives have threatened to limit sympathetic strikes.

The second point is that the I.L.P. in this

country has for years supported a useless programme of nationalisation and other reforms of Capitalism similar to that put in operation in Queensland. In particular, it has sold since about 1917, and is still selling, two pamphlets with the lying titles "Socialism in Practice" and "Socialism in Queensland." In fact, not the slightest attempt has yet been made by the Queensland or any other "Labour" Government to establish Socialism. How does the I.L.P. justify this Capitalist propaganda. Do they favour the prohibition of the legal right to strike?

Thirdly, for those who imagine that the existence and powers of a House of Lords are questions of first-class importance, it is useful to remember that Queensland long ago abolished its Upper House. When it is necessary to crush revolt among the workers, a single chamber in the hands of a "Labour" Government in Queensland can be as drastic and as brutal as anything England or the U.S.A. can show, and what is of more importance from a Capitalist standpoint, it can act so much more promptly than can a cumbersome two-chamber system.

**CAPITALISM IN
THE POST OFFICE.**

The Industrial Court has issued its long-awaited award on the wages of post office workers. The Unions asked for considerable increases, and the Postmaster-General opposed this claim with a demand for a general decrease for new entrants. The award of the Court gives certain small increases at the maxima of the scales applicable to certain grades, introduces decreases in several grades at ages about 18 and 19, and leaves other grades unchanged. As the increases awarded are at the maxima, most of the staff will not be affected immediately. In some grades, telephonists, for instance, most of the women will have left the service before they reach the age at which the raised maximum becomes applicable. The nett addition to the wages bill of the Post Office will be probably between £400,000 and £500,000 (including cost of living bonus), in a "full year" (i.e., when the new maximum rates are being paid to the normal proportion of the staff).

Spread over some 150,000 men and women, this amounts to an average of something under 2s. a week.

What is of particular interest to us, as opponents of nationalisation, is the frank admission of the Court that wages in State services are based on conditions in outside industry.

... the broad principle which should be followed in determining the rates of wages of Post Office Servants, is that of the maintenance of a fair relativity as between their wages and those in outside industries as a whole.—(Decision of Industrial Court No. 1325, July, 1927, p. 11.)

Here we have the kernel of the case against nationalisation from the workers' point of view. The wages and conditions of State employees are governed by the conditions of the labour market in general. They, like other workers, live by the sale of their labour power. They are paid, not the value of their work, but the cost of maintaining them and their families as efficient wealth producers. They are exploited just as other wage earners are. During the past 14 years the Post Office has made a profit of nearly £52,000,000, a direct contribution to the employing class in that the taxation burden which they alone ultimately bear has been reduced by this amount over the period. To nationalise all services would merely reduce all workers to the condition of being still further limited in their power to struggle for better conditions, and would not affect the amount of the income received by the employing class. As the workers find, to their cost, it is harder to fight the State than it is to fight private employers. So hard is it that no civil service union even dare contemplate strikes as part of its programme.

Nationalisation is merely the strengthening and concentration of Capitalism. The interests of all workers, civil servants and non-civil servants, will be served by unqualified opposition to nationalisation as to other forms of Capitalism. Socialism alone is the remedy for our class. POSTMAN.

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WHAT CAPITALISM MEANS.

Sir,—I am taking keen interest in economics and would like to know the exact relation of things and definition concerning what capital means.

I listen to all parties and read all literature of all parties.

G. Peace, a speaker for the "Commonwealth Party," speaking in Hanley, said that last year he visited the outcrops in Hanley and saw men working using their own capital, which proved the worker will do without bosses when all the workers followed the example of the men out-cropping.

Now I wish to know if the tools such as unscientific things as old wheels of bicycles, etc., ropes and buckets to draw the coal up from the outcrop comes under the true definition of capital. Seeing that your definition of capital is the means of exploitation or legalised robbery of the workers.

There is another point perhaps you will be good enough to correct me on. Mr. G. Peace also said during his discourse on the outcroppers that he was amazed to learn the outcroppers were charged five shillings for every ton of coal carted away by the owners of the land.

To me, the economic renters, like Mr. G. Peace, under their single tax or economic scheme, would be somewhat similar, but the only difference would be the State officials would collect the economic rent instead of private or group Capitalist officials; just assuming that we would gain access to the land in the manner the outcroppers did, this would not bring economic security to all, for there would be disorder instead of proper organisation. Plenty of outcroppers would not find a market for their coal and would be forced to leave their outcrops. So it appears to me competition for markets will be in existence under Capitalism, under economic rent, nationalisation, etc.

Of course, I ask for correction on the points raised.

Thanking your in anticipation, Yours sincerely.—INQUIRER.

ANSWER TO INQUIRER.

Capital is wealth used for the purpose of obtaining a profit. The owner of this wealth—the Capitalist—purchases buildings, plant, machinery, raw materials, etc. Then he purchases labour-power to use the plant and machinery on the raw materials for the purpose of producing commodities, or articles

for sale. The value of the raw materials and of the portion of the plant and machinery, used up in a given time, form part of the value of the commodities, and pass over unchanged into the latter value.

The value of the labour-power can be represented at any given period by a particular number of hours' work. If the labourer only worked this particular number of hours each day there would be no surplus produced as the value of the commodities would be equal to the sum of the values of (1) the raw materials used; (2) the portion of plant and machinery worn out; and (3) the labour-power expended. But, by using the whip of hunger, the Capitalist compels the labourer to work for a longer number of hours than is necessary to replace the value of his labour-power. In these extra hours of work is produced the surplus-value which is afterwards split up into various parts. One part may be used to extend the business. Another part may be absorbed in advertising the goods for sale. Still another part may go to pay rates and taxes. The part remaining to the Capitalist after these distributions forms his profit. Surplus-value is thus seen to consist of the products taken by the Capitalist that the labourer has produced in the time during which he works, but for which he has not been paid. In other words, surplus value is based upon the robbery of the worker. Profit is a part of the results of this robbery.

This explanation makes it quite clear that an individual only obtains profit when he robs some worker, or workers. Whatever tools or plant a man employs in working for himself obviously cannot be capital, as he does not obtain a profit because he does not rob anyone. Only when he uses these tools and plant to rob some worker or workers of the values they have produced, do they become capital and he a Capitalist. The fact that the appliances may be out of date or unscientific, does not prevent them becoming capital in the above circumstances—though it certainly places the Capitalist using them at a disadvantage in competition with other Capitalists who are better equipped.

Mr. Pearce's statements are therefore quite inaccurate. The "outcroppers" were not using capital at all. Their few crude appliances were not used to rob anyone, and therefore, in those conditions, could not be capital. Moreover, if the "outcroppers" had to pay five shillings a ton for the coal

obtained the landowners were certainly "bosses" of the situation, and so contradicted Mr. Pearce's other statement that "the outcroppers were doing without the bosses."

"Inquirer" is quite correct when he says that under the single tax theory the economic rent would go into the Government coffers instead of into those of private or group Capitalists. This would leave the workers just as they are to-day, slaves to the master-class, and robbed of the larger portion of the wealth they produce. Only Socialism can end this slavery. Ed. Com.

THE FRANCHISE.

Mr. Rimington writes again criticising the reply to an earlier letter printed in our July issue.

To the Ed. Com.

It is not that I have any fresh evidence to bear upon the subject above, as your wilful misinterpretation of that already submitted, that I write again.

You quote a string of figures from official sources, and because I do not enter into numerals, you imagine that I have discovered a "mare's nest."

Whatever may be said of the Capitalist Class as a Class, they are pretty astute, otherwise they would cease to be Capitalists, and I think that your assumption that they are a lot of "duds," sheer self-complacency.

It may appear to be clever to say, as you do, "If those anomalies were abolished to-morrow, the great mass of the working class would still vote Capitalist candidates into Parliament." Fortunately, you limit your prognostication to the next twelve hours; but it is a nasty get-out. By abusing the working class you shirk your responsibilities to safeguard and extend their powers of political expression. Because I do not give the name and address, etc., of my informant *re* the flaw in the Act, you refer to it as nebulous stuff. Why not investigate for yourselves and prove your statement?

You say that "the reference to the Proxy vote and the dead you do not understand," and I would refer you to your reply, May, 1927, where you state that only those persons may vote by proxy who (a) are already on the absent voters' list. Now persons who are already on the absent voters' list are not exactly imperishable, and it follows that, unless they are replaced by

others, ultimately there ceases to be anyone on the absent voters' list. You may say that this is a quibble; nevertheless, without this explanation, it is obvious that absent voters must be a diminishing quantity. Of course, if the desire to strengthen the arm of working class political representation is opposed to your ideas of Socialist propaganda, it would be a pity to suspend it. Taking your own figures, which do not include the wives and families of the men registered for business qualification, I submit that, as a whole, they constitute sufficient in many cases to turn the scale at an election, for many candidates are returned by a few hundred or less. I wish particularly to draw your attention to the working of the Redistribution Act of 1918, taking Leicester as an example. Prior to this Act, Leicester was one Parliamentary area returning two members. It was then divided into three separate divisions, returning one member each. In most cases the owners of business premises live in another part of the town, so automatically they qualified for extra votes. That the issue is not so negligible as you imagine is, I contend, worthy of searching investigation, and in these days when the democratic principle is being attacked so frequently in the Press and on the platform, it is up to us to contest every plutocratic privilege. I enclose cutting from to-day's *Observer*, which shews that the Divines are at it too, but these are quite mild to articles I have read by Gilbert Frankau and others.

In the words of Joseph Dietzgen, "Take care of the principles and the details will take care of themselves."

Yours fraternally,

F. L. RIMINGTON.

REPLY.

Mr. Rimington admits that he has no "fresh evidence." I propose, therefore, not to follow him again into numerous side-issues, but would refer him to the reply to his first letter. He still does not attempt to disprove the figures which showed that the plural voting anomaly is of negligible extent. While there is a single person with a plural vote an anomaly can be said to exist, but we decline to interest ourselves in anomalies which are unimportant and do not debar the working class from achieving Socialism. Let us repeat the main point. In 1925 there were in England and Wales

19,167,275 persons registered as voters (Statistical Review, 1925, p. 81. H.M.S.O.). Of these 51,357 had University votes and 217,509 had business premises votes. Thus out of every 200 voters three persons had two votes which they could use at a general election. Of the 200 voters 170 (85 per cent.) were members of the working class (see May "S.S."). Thus the distribution of votes as between workers and Capitalists in about 170 to 43. Mr. Rimington asks us to get into a sweat about those three votes, and we reply that it is much more important to convert the 170 workers to Socialism. Incidentally, if Mr. Rimington is so anxious to break a lance, why not advocate the disfranchisement of all Capitalists? It would not be very much more difficult to achieve, and when it was done he would still have the great majority of the 170 working class voters supporting capitalism. H.

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THE VIEW OF A GREAT PAINTER.

"Poverty may induce industry, but it does not produce the fine flower of painting. The test is not poverty, it's money. Give a painter money, and see what he will do: if he does not paint, his work is well lost to the world." —Whistler.

SOCIALISM AND SCIENCE.

Concerning the beginnings of the cosmic system, we are without knowledge. Science is concerned with the universe as we find it, and speculations as to beginning or finality would both be futile. The indestructibility of matter seems fairly established, and we therefore, only look for efficient causes to effect the changes that would bring about the forms we know to-day. There is evidence of a continuity of processes, the totality of which we term evolution. From astrology to astronomy, from alchemy to chemistry, supernatural creation to naturally selected species, such has been the unfolding in the branches of knowledge that has given us the concept of the universe as a totality of its relations: Before we can formulate a science upon any particular subject, we proceed by a certain method. That method is similar whether the subject matter be the Solar System or the Social System. First induction or the gathering of the facts by experiment and observation; second, the classification and generalisation of such facts into sequences or series, and finally the deduction from such sequences of a theory or scientific law which allows of no other interpretation of the facts than the one consistently derived. By such methods came the Atomic Theory in chemistry, the Law of Gravitation in Physics, the Germ Theory in Pathology, and the Labour Theory of Value in Economics. By such methods we are enabled to understand and explain the facts of experience, and also to supply the antidote to the numbing effects of Capitalist mal-education. Laplace, seeking material for his Nebulæ Hypothesis found that he had no need for the God Idea. All science dispenses with such products of man's ignorant fear. It assigns him his place in nature, and lays to rest for ever the belief in the supernatural. True, there are gaps that require filling in, but they are gaps in our knowledge, not in nature. Aided by abstract thought and the service rendered to one science by another, the gaps are filling. Worlds are not born except of pre-existing matter, and the astronomer has but to turn his powerful telescope toward the heavens, and, with the aid of the spectroscope, analyse, review and reconstruct the birth, growth and decay of solar systems like our own. Piecing together what was previously "explained" by childish theology (He made the stars) we learn that this earth was once a whirling gaseous mass thrown off the

sun. Allowing for immense periods of time, cooling would take place, and condensation would bring with it a covering of water and ultimately the formation of oceans. From various sources, we know that primitive life must have begun in these oceans, and through the over-laid strata of the earth disturbed and altered though it has been, we piece together the history of plant and animal life from the geological order in which their fossils are embedded. We find the many extinct forms that were modified and evolved toward those that began life in a world like the one we know to-day.

It was upon this background that Darwin projected the results of his observations. It provided him with the eras of time in which to account for the differentiation of animals and plants from earlier times. It also enabled him to show that continual changing of the earth's surface would beget conditions which, with the prolific nature of all species, would involve intense struggle for the limited available subsistence. Those species that acquired any advantage from one generation to another in the quest for food, and in the struggle against natural obstacles, would be the species that nature's sifting process considered fittest to survive.

Those unable to adapt themselves as species would become extinct. Instead of plan and design, as talked of by the Christian, nature has been found to be one huge slaughterhouse of those for whom no place has been found. Darwin knew, of course, from his researches, that man must be included in his evolutionary process. He did not say, as so many falsely assert, that "man came from monkeys": Man comes from his parents, they from ancestors, and they in turn from more primitive ancestors.

The evidence upon which Darwin relied to establish man's development from lower forms was the close resemblance of primitive man in structure to the apes known as anthropoid. The resemblance is a much closer one than that between some living races of men. This structural likeness with many other similarities, is too close to be explained in any other way than by common ancestry at some earlier period. Man's body, too, contains rudimentary parts which point with certainty to his lowly origin. Life begets life, and all biological forms evolve in a similar manner. From the simple cell stage to the most complex organism, plant, animal and man all develop alike, the cell is the unit. The human embryo commences

with the union of the male and female cell, and the main history of the species is re-told during its development, the last form it passes through before birth being that of the anthropoid ape. Man's journey commences where he develops language and the ability to construct tools. With a mean power over nature's materials, he was for thousands of years cradled in the crude communism of the tribe. With a subsistence so mean that it permitted of no idlers, it seems paradoxical that it was the very increase in productivity that made slavery possible. Slavery and class society arrive together. Says Karl Marx, the founder of the science of Socialism: "All history is the history of class struggles." True to the scientific method, Marx assembled his facts, and answered his critics, with a patience and a thoroughness equalled only by his contemporary Darwin. He bequeathed to the workers an analysis of Capitalist society that has withstood the onslaughts of the paid Professors of the Universities for over half-a-century. In the monumental work Capital, the cause of working-class poverty, is made obvious and clear, and there is shown, that to understand the cause, is to understand the remedy. To remove poverty the workers must by class conscious activity take from the Master Class their means of life. They must commonly own these means which to-day are the Private Property of the Capitalist few. To enjoy the leisurely life, the modern powers of wealth-production make possible, Social revolution is necessary. In order to change the basis of society from a production for profit to a production for use one, the workers themselves must first have the revolutionary outlook. No amount of Capitalist evolution can bring the change to Socialism that is necessary to free the workers. Capitalism has the seeds of its own destruction, but the workers must be the seeds. Lewis H. Morgan, in his "Ancient Society," after a life study of the development of human society, came to conclusions similar to Marx in quite an independent manner. He says (p. 562):

The dissolution of society bids fair to become the termination of a career of which property is the end and aim; because such a career contains the elements of self-destruction. Democracy in government, brotherhood in society, equality in rights and privileges, and universal education, foreshadow the next higher plane of society to which experience, intelligence and knowledge are steadily tending. It will be a revival in a higher form of the liberty, equality and fraternity, of the ancient gentes.

Such conclusions the Socialist can endorse. From our own platform, and through our literature, can be obtained all the knowledge required by the workers for the establishment of that higher form of society. Time and truth will tell without empty slogans, or vote-catching reforms, but with the beacon-light of science we illuminate the road to Socialism. **MAC.**

A WORD IN SEASON.

The London society season is in full swing. It is an event of importance to the ladies and gentlemen of the class we work for—when permitted. It is an event by which we can measure *their* prosperity and *our* poverty. In that respect it is of importance to you: as working men and women you have been taught to believe from childhood that they are so very clever, and brainy, working with their brains sort of thing (sic). There is, therefore, reason to believe that in your simplicity the following will appear to you evidence of their ability. The event, it says:—

Is one which promises to be the most brilliant, and crowded, and interesting of any since pre-war days. . . . 300,000 people are coming to London. . . . They will be doing Henley, which is so very gay, and Ascot, which is so very smart, The Derby, the Horse Show, the Royal Tournament, all the fêtes and functions, until they run off to Goodwood in tailor-mades and leave those green woods and scented Downs for Cowes and the "white wings" on the Solent ("Sunday News," May 8, 1927).

And very nice, too! And what of you fellow workers? You will be doing the same old round of toil which makes such luxury possible. When, with the passing of the summer months, your masters and their ladies depart for the moors, the country house, or the Riviera, you will remain the occupants of the murky, mud-plastered cities of industry. Still, you will argue, who are we, anyway? They've got the brains. What is the real contrast? Indolence and parasitism—revelling in splendour. Usefulness and skill exercised in every department of wealth production rewarded with penury, insecurity, and often premature death. Chasing the seasons around the earth in a mad whirl of never-satisfying pleasure may exercise these people in many directions; it is obvious that, miles from the seat of operations, they can play no part in wealth-producing processes. That part is the workers' part, including the real directing, the organising, and even the collecting of the profits.

which flow on during their absence. Still, some sort of excuses have to be made as these contrasts become more pronounced. The contempt that the master class have for your political intelligence is shown from the following clap trap which appeared in a leading article (*Westminster Gazette*, June 13th, 1927) in the very midst of this welter of wealth. They say:—

The fact is that no policy other than strict economy is possible for a country such as ours. One wouldn't have thought it, would they? Some may think that we overdraw the picture: that though there may be a greater flaunting of wealth, the worst forms of squalor have been removed from the workers' life. Have they? Not a stone's throw from London's fashionable and wealthy centre are conditions that would disgrace savages. Seven Westminster citizens, headed by a gentleman who preaches the blessedness of poverty, visited 490 houses in the Victoria Ward (Rev. Francis Boyd, report *Evening News*, June 6th, 1927). Here are a few of the things that they saw in this rich residential area:—

In Aylesford Street a woman, her son, his wife, and their boy of 14 were found all living in one room. In another house where four families shared eight rooms there were 14 adults and 10 children. In a court in Wilton Road a husband, wife, five daughters aged 20, 16, 15, 13 and 5 and a son aged 18, had only two rooms in which to live and sleep. Yet another instance in Gray's Inn Court is given where, in two rooms were a grandmother, man and wife, girls aged 14, 13 and 7 and boys aged 10, 3 and 1.

"The list could be extended indefinitely," says the report. "Particularly numerous are the families of six, seven, and more members living in two rooms in tenement houses."

Of an address in Alderney Street it says:—

There are sewer rats so numerous that within 24 hours of the laying of a new board it was eaten through. The children are terrified of the rats and refuse to go to bed. One boy was sent to Westminster Hospital suffering from nervous exhaustion.

And this after one hundred years of reform, within the precincts of the Houses of Parliament. Every London district and every large town could show similar plague spots. The workers being content with the scraps and the offal, the gloomy hovels, and excluded from life's real pleasures, have allowed their masters to take full advantage of their contentment. Blame or sympathy in either case is waste of time: nothing but the recognition that the removal of all social

evils is their mission, and theirs alone, can rid society of such glaring contrasts in wealth and squalor. Experience is a hard and often a slow teacher, but there are signs that it has slowly but surely been doing its work. Awaken, workers, to the possibilities of Socialism, so that you may join with us for the Social Revolution. **MAC.**

WHY WE WANT SOCIALISM.

Old people tell us how lucky we are living in an age when the aeroplane and the steamer and the express train bring America as near to London as Edinburgh used to be. We see moving pictures of tigers in the jungle and natives living in uncivilised ways. We read every day in the papers of fresh marvels in the way of machinery—and yet we have to work hard, or look for work, and keep a watchful eye on a doubtful future—just as our forefathers did before the age of steam, gas and electricity.

In spite of all the marvels man has contrived, we still live near enough as of old, a life of struggle and poverty, with a little joy thrown in.

The reason for this is the same as it used to be. As of old the people who work do not own the things that they make, nor the tools that they work with, nor the land that they live on. The things that are made and the tools and the land are owned mainly by a group apart, the rich people who do not work, but live on the money they get from the shares they hold in companies. To buy enough shares in a company to be of any real use, requires a great deal of money, and as working people generally only earn enough to provide themselves with the most urgent of the things they need, the chance of a worker passing into the rich class of owners is remote.

The things that are made to-day, clothes, houses, food and so on, are not made simply because they are useful, though, of course, if they were not needed they would not be made at all. The real reason why such things are made is because they can be sold, and the company selling them make a profit. That is why we read in the papers of this or that company making good or bad profits. And that is also why we read of houses falling down, accidents happening, bad food, and bad clothes being made, because the owners of the companies do not care what they make so long as they make good profit.

Now, if the only way of making things

was by a rich class of people setting poor people to work, then there would be nothing to grumble about. But who gave the rich their power and their wealth? There is no law of some supernatural power that lays it down that one man shall be born rich and another poor. As the music-hall song used to run, "We all came into the world with nothing, and we can't take anything out."

The pictures we see at picture shows often give us views of natives who know not master and man. People who club together to make the things that are needed, and then distribute what they make to those who need. Why, then, can't we do the same on a much larger scale? Masters are only needed where despots must be served, where there is an oppressed class to be kept in subjection. Just as an allotment holder cultivates his little plot with a master to push him or a shareholder to draw a dividend, so the whole of the people of the world can cultivate the earth in harmonious societies, and reap its fulness in community when once they make up their minds to do so.

GILMAC.

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S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS LONDON DISTRICT.

- Sundays:** Highbury Corner, 11.15 a.m.
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.
Victoria Park, 4 p.m.
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.
Paddington, Prince of Wales, 11.30 a.m.
Bethnal Green, opposite Salmon and Ball, 7.30 p.m.
Tooting, Church Lane, 7.30 p.m.
- Mondays:** Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.
Becontree, Burnside Road, and Green Lanes, 8 p.m.
- Wednesdays:** Hackney, Paragon Rd. and Mare St. 8 p.m.
- Fridays:** Clerkenwell, Almeida St., Upper St., N., 8 p.m.
West Ham, Water Lane 8 p.m.
Leyton, James Lane, High Road, 8 p.m.
- HANLEY BRANCH MEETINGS.**
- Sundays:** Hanley, Market Square, 7 p.m.
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BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Rd. Discussion second Thurs. in month.
- BECONTREE.**—Sec., S. Cash, 32, Greenway. Public invited.
- BETHNAL GREEN.**—Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m., at 2, Co-operative Buildings, 361, Bethnal Green Rd., E.2. Sec., D. Jacobs, at above address.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec. E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st & 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.
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- CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Sec., at above address.
- EAST LONDON.**—Sec., A. Jacobs, 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.
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- ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sister-rd., Holloway, N. Sec., M. Baker, 18, Orpingley-rd., N.7.
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- MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park Street, Salford, Manchester.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 7.45 p.m., at 114, Duke St., Stretford Road.
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- TOOTING.**—Sec., A. Yeomans, 15, University-rd., Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary 22, Dunloe-ave., N.15. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.
- WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

WEST HAM.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford-rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

WOOD GREEN. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

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LONDON, NOVEMBER, 1927.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

THE ANATOMY OF CAPITAL.

SIR ARTHUR KEITH'S ECONOMICS.

Professor Sir Arthur Keith is an anatomist with a considerable reputation. He occupied the presidential chair at the annual meeting of the British Association at Leeds barely two months ago, and caused a journalistic stir by his review of that controversial topic, "Man's origin." This has recently been published, with additions, by Messrs Watts (price 7d.). It is with the concluding essay that the present scribe proposes to deal.

It is entitled "Capital as a Factor in Evolution," and advances the view that capital is an indispensable element in all progress, organic and social. We are fairly well acquainted with that type of anti-Socialist to whom all tools are capital, and consequently all tool-owners are capitalists, no matter whether it be plain Bill Smith who has "set up on his own" as a plumber, or romantic Robinson Crusoe, when he discovered the utility of a hammer.

Sir Arthur, however, presents us with a rather interesting variation of this fantasy. According to him, any means of subsistence not immediately consumed is capital. Thus the bees which store up honey, fowls which lay eggs, our mothers when in a certain condition (with milk available) are all really capitalists, little though they may dream it. One can imagine the bosom of the speculative investor swelling with pride at finding himself classed with such time-honoured institutions.

We fear, however, that Sir Arthur has been too well brought up to be sufficiently comprehensive.

For instance, he omits entirely to mention those interesting examples of industrious capitalists, the bug and the common flea.

It is a matter of observation that they cannot pursue their activities indefinitely but make periodical retirements in order to consume the sanguinary fluid which they have so assiduously acquired and stored up within the appropriate portion of their anatomy. Small wonder that the average pseudo-Socialist is staggered when faced with the question, "What would you do without capital?" Existence would be unrecognisable to him.

To return to our professor. "There is," says he, "in most of us a wish to save something from our daily income, be it large or small, to carry us over days of dearth or sickness. We save, too, for quite another purpose, namely, to give our children a start in life . . . and if it so happens that those parts of unconsumed wages, etc., are not required for instant use, then we consult the financial columns of a newspaper, or produce a stockbroker's list, and presently our savings are *turned into capital*. Before we realise it, our savings are being used to build a merchant ship, or a cotton factory, etc."

Notice the naive way in which our anatomist (so keen in his own department of knowledge) skips over the vital point. At one moment *all* savings are "capital," irrespective of the use to which they are put, from the corn in the granaries of Ancient Egypt to the stores of food which Scottish students used to bring from their fathers' farms to keep themselves through the winter at the universities. Then, in the same breath as it were, we have the implied admission that savings require to be "*turned into capital*" by the process of investment. The merest tyro in finance knows that

money is not invested simply in order that it may return to its owner at a later date. It is invested in order that it may yield a profit, or acquire an increase. Sums of money cease to be capital when they are simply spent on articles of personal consumption, no matter how long they may have been saved. To "live on capital" is to destroy capital. Capital can only live on labour. It must maintain contact with the process of production. By ignoring this elementary fact the henchman of "science" loses the meaning of the term he discusses.

In the course of its development capital takes a variety of forms. Here it is means of subsistence of the workers, there it is the tools with which they work; but in either case these things are capital only because they are consumed with a view to producing commodities for sale at a profit. Because capital takes the form of means of subsistence and tools, some people assume that all tools and means of subsistence are capital. One might as well say that because admirals are sailors, all sailors are admirals. If, for instance, the tools of the handicraftsmen in the middle ages and their food stores and raw material are to be regarded as capital, then the distinction between capitalism and all previous forms of society disappears. We are left without any reason for describing other systems as feudalism, patriarchalism, etc. This loose mode of thought destroys the meaning of words and robs them of all value.

All of which goes to show that men of science can be just as useful to the ruling class as agents of confusion as the priesthood. As Sir Arthur himself puts it in his preface, "men of science and religious leaders have the same ideals." In other words, they are both maintained by, believers in, and upholders of—capitalism.

E. B.

BETHNAL GREEN.

A LECTURE ON

POLITICAL

versus

INDUSTRIAL ACTION

AT

BETHNAL GREEN LIBRARY,

On Friday, November 11th, at 7.30 p.m.

SPEAKER - COM. JACOBS.

ADMISSION FREE. QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION.

WHO ARE THE CAPITALISTS?

"Every Man a Capitalist" is the title of an article written by Sir Sydney Low, and published in the "Sunday Pictorial" (2.10.27). The sub-title is "How Wealth is Spreading Amongst the Workers."

Sir Sydney accuses Socialists of being "dealers in popular unrest," and states that for years past we have been saying that "the rich are growing richer and the poor becoming poorer." Also, we have said this so often and so persistently that many earnest persons who are not Socialists are inclined to believe there must be some truth in the indictment. In fact, there is none. So says Sir Sydney.

Of course, we are very pleased to hear that we are making an impression upon "many earnest persons who are not Socialists."

To show that the rich are getting poorer, Low tells us "they are not spending extravagantly, their lives are simpler and less luxurious than they used to be." These unfortunate people are parting with "their large, expensive houses, and offering their estates for sale. Many of them protest that they are living upon their capital in order to pay their way."

This is all very sad, but it is not proof that the rich are getting poorer. They may not be spending extravagantly because they desire to invest more; they may be living less luxurious and more simple lives in the interests of their health. But the really important point, which Sir Sydney overlooks, is that large estates cannot be sold unless there exist purchasers. Unless, therefore, he believes that the large estates are being bought up by unemployed miners and others who have been compelled to relinquish their former occupation, there must still be rich people willing to be extravagant and able to afford it.

Another factor ignored by Sir Sydney Low is that many of these estates have been broken up merely because of the tempting opportunity of netting big gains, owing to the demand for building sites.

Then to show how every worker tends to become a capitalist, Sir Sydney refers to the increase in the number of privately-owned motor cars. He says: "By the end of this year there will be 700,000 self-propelled private vehicles in England. And who owns them? For the most part people of moderate and even small means."

Our opponent, evidently thinking this fact not sufficient to convince the sceptical, put forth further evidence to show that some day every worker will be a capitalist. This time it is houses. He tells us that "since 1923 600,000 new houses have been bought by middle class and working class tenants." These houses have been built with State, or municipal, aid. And then "hundreds of thousands of others already in existence or erected by private builders have been sold to occupiers of the same kind."

"House owning," he goes on, "is not the only method whereby the man of limited income is turning himself into a capitalist. He tends more and more to become an investor." As evidence, Sir Sydney informs us, "National Savings Certificates are now issued to the value of over £642,000,000. It may safely be asserted that almost the whole of that £642,000,000 represents capital belonging to the small investor." But does it in fact?

In 1922, that is, before the workers' savings had been drained by five years of trade depression, unemployment, short time and lowered wages, the Montague Committee were only able to express the opinion that "at least half" of the total sold up to the 31st March, 1922, represented the subscriptions of small investors (see Colwyn Committee Report, page 21).

Mr. W. T. Layton, the Liberal economist and statistician, estimates that small investors hold £455 million out of a total £6,592 million, which makes up the Internal National Debt, the magnificent proportion of 7 per cent. ("Economic Journal," June, 1927, p. 204.)

However, enough! Is it the private ownership of a motor car, whether a Ford or a Rolls-Royce, that makes a person a capitalist? No. Is a man a capitalist because he owns the house in which he lives? No. Is it the possession of a few Savings Certificates that makes a man a capitalist? No.

What, then, is a capitalist? A capitalist is one who owns enough property in the means of living such as land, factories, railways, steamships, raw materials, etc., to be able to live without needing to work. The income derived from this private ownership frees the capitalist from the necessity of working for his livelihood.

It may be asked, what, then, is a worker?

A worker is one who, not owning any or sufficient property, is forced to sell his labour-power to the capitalist class, in order that he may live.

Sir Sydney speaks of the "lower middle class" and the "higher working class." This is "confusion worse confounded" as there are only two classes in modern capitalism, those who live by working and those who live by owning. And, as shown above, it is the manner in which a person obtains his or her livelihood that places him or her in one of these two classes.

As to wealth spreading out amongst the workers, heaps of evidence could be put forth to show the contrary to be true. First of all the workers are painfully aware of the constant dwindling in their wages, and ever-present unemployment.

In the report of the Ministry of Health, 1926-27, it is stated: "Poor Law Relief has risen nearly 350 per cent. since 1914, but outdoor relief has risen by over 1,000 per cent. The number of persons receiving out-relief were, in 1914, 387,796; 1927, 1,722,084" ("Daily News," 16.9.27).

Then Mr. Harold Cox, who is a defender of capitalism, writing in the "Sunday Times," 31.7.27., says: "In round figures pauperism in 1914 represented 21 per 1,000 of the population, and in 1927, as stated above, just under 40 per 1,000. It is, therefore, not far from the truth to state that the proportion of paupers to self-dependant citizens has doubled since 1914."

The above facts show the falsity of Sir Sydney Low's argument. As capitalism develops, the major portion of the wealth produced concentrates still further into fewer and fewer hands. It is, therefore, obvious that the poverty of the mass must increase relatively to the wealth of the propertied class.

And as bad as the lot of the workers may be at the moment, it will tend to become worse with the further development of capitalism.

The only solution to the poverty problem of the working class is not for individual workers to buy a motor car, a house, or a few Savings Certificates, but to organise in the Socialist Party in order to do away with capitalism, the cause of their poverty, and to bring into existence Socialism, the social system which will free them from poverty.

C.

DOCTRINES, DOGMAS AND MARX. AN ESSAY IN CLEAR THINKING.

A Canadian correspondent sends us a cutting from "The Sporting News," No. 32 (of Winnipeg), and asks us for our opinion on it. As the cutting is undated, we cannot supply our Canadian readers with any further means of identification except that the article appears to be an editorial, and is headed "Capitalism."

The article has a good deal to say about "doctrines" and "dogmas," and the workers' "lack of understanding," but is itself written in such an ambiguous style that the reader is not assisted in his efforts to get at what the article is intended to make clear—if there is any such intention!

Here is a quotation from the early part of the article:—

The point to be noted is that, all that passed for knowledge in those days [early, or prehistoric times] has long since been forgotten, but the struggles of mind over matter were passed on, and to-day the man who seeks to read history will not seek to damn Capital or Capitalism, but rather seeks to understand it. How natural for the pioneer of thought to make mistakes; he but glimpses the truth, and the pain and struggles of the mass often supply just that portion of his idea which he has perforce left ambiguous. This has been so in all the fields of scientific research. Sociology, or the science of life, is difficult to understand. The worker untrained in the process of mind, though exceedingly clever with tools, often becomes a victim of his own misunderstanding and becomes lost twixt the philosophical and the scientific, the theoretical and the practical.

Now what exactly is the meaning of this nebulous collection of statements? To write that "all that passed for knowledge" in early times "has been forgotten" is to write rubbish. The knowledge, for instance, that it is dangerous to stand under a falling tree, is as true to-day as it was when man first grasped the fact. And what is the precise meaning of "the struggles of mind over matter"? Is this not of the nature of a dogma? After all, the mind seeks to grasp the ways of the world including itself, and if the article is intended as a contribution to clear thinking, it should avoid phrases that are ambiguous, and confuse. An illustration or two would have helped readers to grasp what is meant by the pain and struggles of the masses supplying just that portion of a pioneer's idea which he is alleged to have perforce left ambiguous!

Again, is sociology the science of life? Is it not rather the science which investigates

the means and methods of human association? Surely Biology is the science of life!

The writer, or writers, having enlightened the readers with the above ambiguities and false phrases, then warms to the business in hand, and give to the world the following pearls of wisdom:—

"He formulated the three doctrines, viz., the materialist conception of history, the class struggle and the theory of surplus value. His work is the exposition of these doctrines. Does the world grasp them as doctrines to be used to influence understanding. 'They do not'; it is much easier to give them a dogmatic interpretation than to read and understand them. 'Did Marx say the last thing in economic law?' He did not, in fact; history will ultimately show that he really said the first rather than the last. His three doctrines included all the knowledge known and all that was to be known, because the doctrines comprise the whole of existence. The workers have been left to understand Marx as best they may, and they seem to be making a sorry mess of the job. When dogma takes the place of doctrine, then imagination runs riot and reason is dethroned for the time being."

We are told that Marx did not say the last thing in economic law, in fact, he said rather the first. Yet "his three doctrines included all the knowledge known [what is knowledge that is unknown?] and all that was to be known, because the doctrines comprise the whole of existence"! Reason certainly seems to be a little bit off the throne here! If Marx said the first thing in economic law, then what about Aristotle, Franklin, Adam Smith, Ricardo, and the rest?

May we suggest that it would have been a concession on the part of whoever is responsible for the article if they had hinted at the meanings of "dogmas" and "doctrines" so that readers would have had some small opportunity of piercing the veil of mystery surrounding the "points" in the article. A dogma is an opinion or doctrine accepted on trust or authority; a doctrine is a principle, view, or set of opinions taught. The principles put forward by Marx were arrived at after a lifetime's examination of a veritable storehouse of facts; and the principles together with facts upon which they were based were set down for all to examine and criticise. The workers, where they have had the oppor-

tunity, and in spite of the intentionally pernicious effect of capitalist education, have succeeded in grasping the essence of Marx's teaching, and this without the aid of a "higher education."

To say that the workers are "making a sorry mess of the job" is either the empty words of an enemy or the cheap sneer of a cocksure blunderer.

"Leaving the materialist conception, and surplus value to one side for brevity, in this article, what interpretation do many of the workers put on the class struggle? In the ordinary language of the day, it is 'get ready for a fight, organize for a revolution,' and this dogma of the class struggle has sure brought much havoc among the workers. It was this dogma that organized the German Proletariat and got them ready to obey the Imperialism of Germany. It is the same 'bunk' which inflamed Russia, who intend to inflame the rest of the world if they are allowed to have their way. The point in this connection between doctrine and dogma is that the three doctrines are a threefold conception, a theoretical conception from which lessons of understanding may be learnt. Where the three are understood, each in relation to the other, it presupposes an understanding which leads to the evolutionary rather than the revolutionary. If the revolution takes place in mind, it no longer is sought for in the national rough house tactics. It cannot lead to the destruction of wealth, war, and all it entails. It must lead to conservation of national life and the workers must needs fit themselves with understanding, so that those who direct the struggle shall be subdued by it. The class struggle is a doctrine, is theoretical, and will change with the process of changing industry, but as a dogma it, like many superstitious dogmas, will always remain the same till society outlives it. The worker may continue to damn capitalism, but it cannot be denied that it is the school-master of the iron and steel age, and materially shortens the distance towards emancipation in proportion as doctrine understood supersedes—Dogmas—the misunderstandings."

The above is the last paragraph in the precious article. It may be noted in passing that the materialist conception and surplus value are put aside, at the beginning, for the sake of brevity, but brought in again a few lines later as inseparable from the class struggle theory. It may also be noted that

nowhere is there an attempt to define any of them, beyond assuring us that they are "doctrine"! It is asserted that many workers interpret the class struggle as a call to "get ready for a fight, organise for the revolution," and then the assertion is made that this dogma was the cause of the downfall of the German Proletariat. This is a false interpretation of the situation, and is used for the purpose of bolstering up the "Evolutionary" as opposed to the revolutionary view of social change. But first of all a word on the downfall of the German Social Democracy. This was the outcome of a long period of propaganda that had as its basis the view, still common among so-called leaders of democracy, that the main thing was to get a large body of workers organised, without bothering much whether they understood clearly for what they were organising. This had nothing at all to do with the class struggle theory.

"Evolutionary," scientifically understood, signifies an unfolding, a movement from a relatively lower to a relatively higher state, and this, as applied to society, includes in the movement "revolution" as the expression of a complete change of basis. The people, however, who urge "evolutionary" as opposed to "revolutionary" views of social change interpret "evolution" to mean a gradual change of the social basis, from private ownership of the means of production to common ownership, taking place step by step, a little at a time, on the quiet without anybody being the wiser until, hey presto! the deed is done. Socialism is here, whoever would have thought it? And this is apparently the culminating idea in the article with which we are dealing. Lo, the mountain bringeth forth not even a mouse, but only the hair off the leg of a gnat!

GILMAC.

BATTERSEA.

A LECTURE.

SOCIALISM AND DICTATORSHIP

At BATTERSEA TOWN HALL (Lower Hall)

On Sunday, November 6th, at 7.30 p.m.

SPEAKER - A. KOHN.

ADMISSION FREE. QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

THE NATIONALISATION FRAUD.

While the workers are separated from their means of life, dependant upon the masters for work in order to live, all economies in doing that work mean fewer required. Nationalisation is one of those capitalist economies, and wherever it operates, as on certain railways, or over whole industries as in Australia, its effects have been detrimental to the workers. The capitalist class in control of political power will decide when and where privately run industries will serve their class better as State capitalist concerns, such as the Post Office. Despite empty phrases of Communist and Labour reformers, the workers will have no control while the masters own. "Forward" (13/8/27), the Scottish organ of the I.L.P., says: "The whole of the Labour programme for the reconstruction of our two basic industries is based on the practicability of Nationalisation." True, the Labour Party, with its lords, viscounts, parsons and capitalist financial support, require a programme that will win the votes of those who are tired of the orthodox parties, but it must appear to be one different from those parties. It must contain issues over which they appear to fight the capitalists, issues over which the workers can win a "great victory," but which will still leave them workers as of yore. At the moment the Trade Union Bill and Nationalisation serve the purpose, as Home Rule, Free Trade, Votes for Women, etc., have done in the past—served to divert your attention from your slavery. But a problem confronts the Labour Party. With office and power looming in the distance, to make Nationalisation an issue would, with power conferred upon them, imply the necessity of introducing legislation to make it a fact: What would be the result? They would first lose a vote-catching stunt that has served them well when power seemed remote, but more important, its worsening effects upon the workers' conditions would eventually disillusion those members of the working class who support capitalism masquerading as Labourism. J. H. Thomas, ambassador of class docility, sees this. Addressing an international gathering of school teachers on the subject of the practicability of Nationalisation, he told them plainly that as a Labour Party measure it is not practical now.

"Forward" (Ibid) quotes his statement from the "Manchester Guardian" (9/8/27),

and appears to express astonishment. Say they: "In the light of this, Mr. Thomas is surely entitled to give us an explanation of his statements at the Teachers' Conference." But stay! There is a gentleman whose photo appears on the same page as this request, from whom "surely" an explanation is due also. He is the Great God (capitals, please) of the I.L.P., Ramsay MacDonald. He saw the light sooner than J. H. Thomas, so is entitled to the first explanation. He has said: "I should not be doing justice to you or to myself if I told you that Nationalisation was going to get you out of your present difficulties; you know that I should be lying if I tried to spoof you in that way." "Times," (27/7/25). Here is a dilemma. According to this idol of the I.L.P., both they and the Labour Party, whose programme is based on the "practicability of Nationalisation" are lying and spoofing to you. Shall we be told it is not true because "we are only a small party," or is it true because these more far-seeing leaders realise that things are only practical to them while they serve as vote-catching expedients. MAC.

PAMPHLETS FOR SALE.

We have had a big demand for the pamphlets published by the Socialist Party of Canada and advertised for sale in the October "S.S." "Slaves of the Farm" is sold out; copies of the other six are still available:—

"Wage-Labour and Capital" (Marx), 60 pages, 4d.

"Communist Manifesto" (Marx and Engels), 59 pages, 4d.

"Economic Causes of War" (P. T. Leckie), 132 pages, 6d.

"Causes of Belief in God" (Lafargue), 48 pages, 6d.

"Socialism—Utopian and Scientific" (Engels), 95 pages, 6d.

"Value, Price and Profit" (Marx), 78 pages, 6d.

Note.—Postage extra: ½d. per copy.

NOTE.

Replies to the following correspondents will appear in our next issue:—F. L. Rimington (Leicester), "Student" (Hanley), Robt. Hart (N.W.5).

THE ROLE OF THE FINANCIER.

Finance, we are told, is the sinew of modern industry, the base upon which commercial operations rest, and the controller, in high finance, is one of the worshipful company of captains of industry. Now and again there is a storm in financial circles, one of its star performers comes to ruin, the veil is torn aside, and we get a glimpse of the nature of financial operations.

Such an instance has occurred lately with the ruin and suicide of the financier, James White. A fellow financier, Sir Edward Mackay Edgar, made a statement to the *Daily News* (2/7/27) from which we extract the following:—

"Thousands of people will be ruined as the result of the wild speculations of the late Mr. James White. Already two of his closest friends have gone 'broke,' and God alone knows what will happen within the next fortnight. It will be the sensation of the 20th century in the matter of finance.

"The British Controlled Oilfields is my baby. I organised it and got it into a fine position. It was the aim of Jimmy White to obtain as many shares as possible and force up the price. Then he hoped to sell and realise a fortune. That was as far back as three years ago. I would not consent because of the advice of technical experts on the spot.

"On the Thursday before Good Friday, Mr. White came to me and asked me to join a pool to force up the price of B.C.O. shares. For five hours I was on my hands and knees in my flat imploring him not to engage in such a mad venture, knowing that disaster could be the only result. He left me that night, and I have only seen him once since.

"He entered upon a bitter campaign to reduce me to financial ruin. He failed in his efforts. He bought shares right and left. He relied upon by group of friends selling short. We never unloaded a single share, but kept them, and we knew that White on June 30th would have to meet his enormous commitments or go 'broke.' This last effort of his was a gambler's last throw of the dice. I knew the crash was coming. All my friends were aware of it."

The interesting side to us in the above statements is the fact that the foundations of modern industry are so frail that men like White can play ducks and drakes with it and bring chaos where order should reign,

by indulging in lawful financial operations. Instances such as this bring to the front the question, "What is the object of industry?" Is it to provide people of a peculiar nature with an outlet for a glorious gamble, or is it to provide society with means to meet the mental and physical needs of the people composing society. Evidently our "great" captains of industry hold the view that the earth and the fulness thereof was made for their sport and enjoyment—and we are merely items too cheap to be worthy of consideration. GILMAC.

LARKIN PROTESTS.

In the October issue we dealt with the Irish Election and the confusion caused by the conflicting policies of English and Irish Communists. We pointed out that while Larkin supported the Republicans and opposed the Labour Party, the English Communists who supported Larkin supported the Labour Party too. It appears that Larkin is not satisfied with this, and in the "Workers' Life" (September 30th) is a statement to the effect that Larkin and his Irish Worker League have protested against what they regard as an "error" on the part of their English Communist colleagues. The matter is to be referred for a "full report and discussion" to the Central Committee of the C.P.G.B.

It is, however, amusing to observe the ground on which Larkin objects. "The Irish Worker League, alone of all Irish political groups, is carrying on a revolutionary fight on behalf of the Irish working class." (Italics ours.)

Larkin, with a peculiar logic of his own, while opposing the Labour Party because "The Irish Worker League alone . . . is carrying on a fight, etc.," tells the workers to support and vote for the Republicans! H.

CORRECTIONS.

On page 5 of the September "S.S." figures were given showing the parallel movement of wages and the cost of living over a series of years. In error, the authority for the figures was given as the Ministry of Labour Gazette. Actually the table (in full) is to be found on p. 97 of the Report of the Balfour Committee, "Survey of Industrial Relations" (1926).

On p. 31 of the October issue, column 2, line 20, "with a master," should read "without a master."

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Twelve Months, post free.. .. 2s. 6d.
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The Socialist Standard,

NOV.,



1927

THE FRUITS OF "REFORM."

Those who credit our present rulers with a special regard for the interests of the workers would do well to ponder upon the facts revealed at the recent inquiry into the fire at the St. Pancras film factory, when five workers' lives were lost.

According to Mr. Macklin, Inspector of Factories, "The outbreak of fire could have been avoided by the use of some other method of drying" ("Daily Chronicle," Oct. 11th); while Miss Ada Dunch, another inspector, stated that she addressed a letter to the firm regarding breaches of the regulations as long ago as January. She further stated that there were over 4,800 factories and workshops in her district and that her staff consisted of one half-time man, and some assistance given by another inspector.

Asked by a representative of the Home Office if she found it difficult to carry out the annual inspection, she replied that it was impossible. Her statement was corroborated by Mr. Macklin already quoted.

In his classic examination of capitalist industrialism, Marx long ago showed how numerous Acts of Parliament (ostensibly designed to regulate conditions in factories) remained dead letters owing to the failure of Parliament to vote the funds for the necessary inspectors. Seventy odd years later we find that his criticism still applies.

Liberal, Labour and Conservative Governments have succeeded one another in the

task of administering the affairs of the capitalist class; with the result that working men and women still go needlessly to their doom in order that their good, kind masters may enjoy lives of culture and benevolence on the profits realised from the workers' toil.

The wage-slaves of to-day pile up wealth in hitherto unheard-of quantities; yet it is too much to expect that they should be enabled to do so in security. It is cheaper to let them be burnt or buried alive than to pay for the necessary supervision to prevent such events.

The tragic death of five factory hands is of course a paltry flea-bite which passes unnoticed by the average slave who enjoys, by way of amusement, pictures of the wholesale slaughter of the members of his class when glorified by such names as "Mons" and "Verdun." The putrid sentiment which clogs the minds of working-class patriots prevents them seeing the shrieking absurdity of a social order under which millions can be poured forth daily for years in order to produce a blood-bath while the money cannot be found to save women in England from a holocaust.

Over a million men and women on the Labour Exchanges and a shortage of factory inspectors! What have you to say, you Tory, Liberal and Labour reformers?

The blood of the workers calls out for an answer!

STRATFORD LECTURES.

A SERIES OF

EIGHT LECTURES

WILL BE HELD AT THE

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On SUNDAYS, commencing OCT. 16th.

SUBJECT—

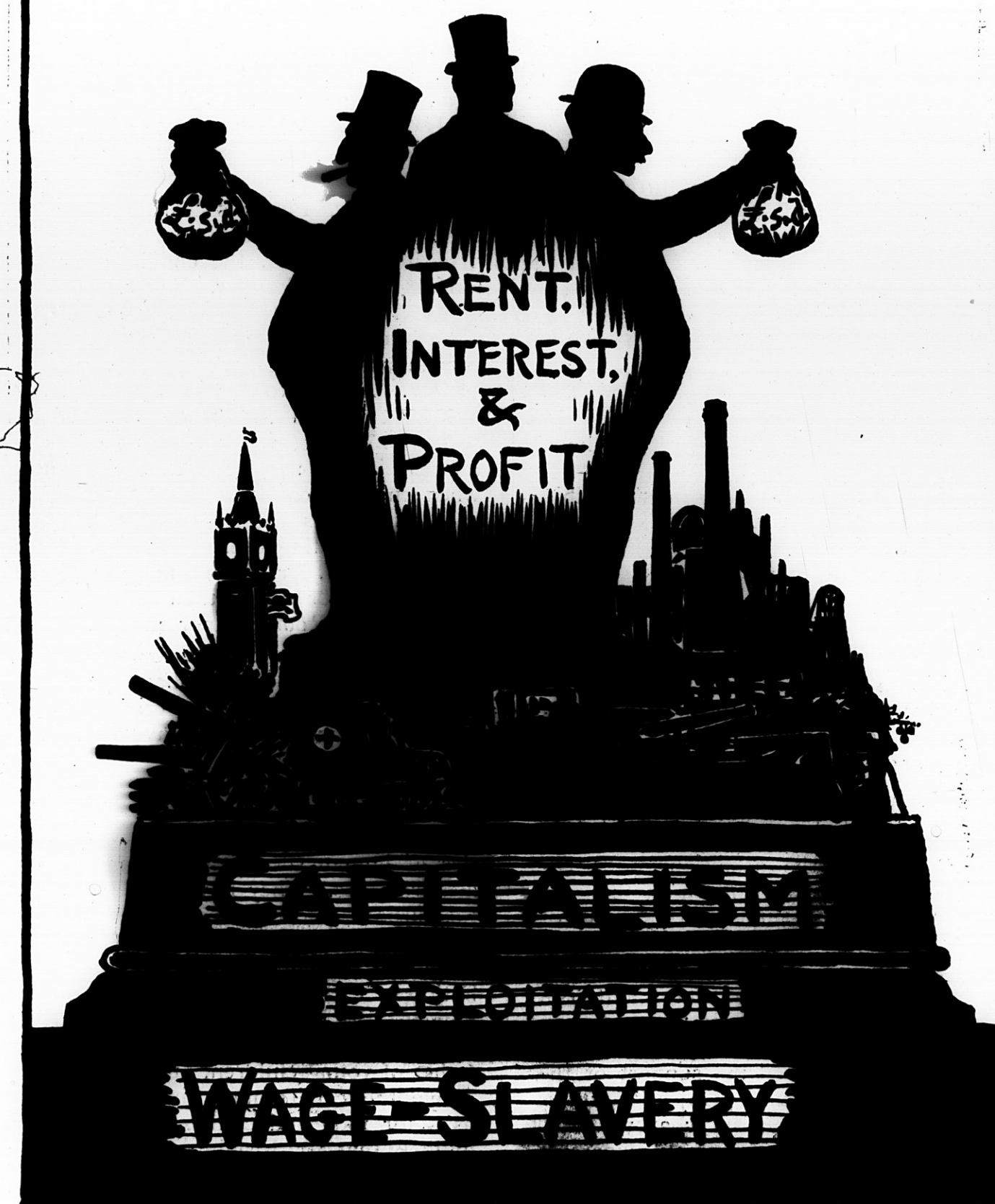
"Aspects of Socialism."

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION INVITED.

ADMISSION FREE.

Doors open 7 p.m.

Chair taken at 7.30 p.m.

"CAPITALISM'S BIG 3"

WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

The following is a letter from a correspondent, and our reply:—

London, October 20th, 1927.

Dear Sir,

I attended the debate at the Battersea Town Hall on "Socialism."

Rather unfortunately, neither party defined Socialism, so the debate was rather a failure. Perhaps you can help me. "Socialism means the entire absence of private property. The State is to own and control everything."

Would my P.O. bank account be confiscated? Would they take away my little shop? Should I be compelled, with a Grey Ticket, B.2, 48392, to deal at only one shop and take the goods they offer?

Can I own a £5 note? Bernard Shaw says no, that would make me a capitalist. I heard him say that, at a lecture in answer to a question. Could I buy a cricket bat, and call it my very own? How should I get the money?

Could I buy a joint of beef without money?

I am quite in a fog. Please discuss this and get the next SOCIALIST STANDARD—a good paper—to reply.

Yours truly,

A. B. FIRMIN.

OUR REPLY.

Mr. Firmin claims acquaintanceship with the SOCIALIST STANDARD, but he surely does not read it very carefully. If he did, he would have observed that the debate in question centred round the question which of the two parties should the working class support, and further, that every issue of the "S.S." contains the definition of Socialism. Socialism does not mean anything so negative and silly as "the entire absence of private property," nor is "the State" to "own and control everything." The latter is a distorted description of State Capitalism which may justly be attributed to one section of the Labour Party. It is not Socialism, and has never received the support of the Socialist Party as our "Object" states (see last page). Socialism is a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community."

Mr. Firmin will see here that ownership and control will be vested in the whole community, not in the "State," that common ownership is concerned with means of production which, as our "Principles" go on to explain, refers to land, factories, railways, etc. We hasten to relieve our correspondent of the horrible fear that we propose the communal ownership and control of his toothbrush and collar-stud.

Far from abolishing "all private property," Socialism will place it in the power of all of the population to share in the varied kinds of wealth which society can produce—something which at present is denied in large measure to most of them.

As for Mr. Firmin's "little shop," we suggest that he probably wants it only as a means to an end, the end being the obtaining of food, clothing, shelter, recreation, amusements, etc. Socialist society will place these things at the disposal of Mr. Firmin as for the rest of the members of society. As it is to obtain these useful articles that we all at present endeavour to secure £5 notes, we shall most of us lose interest in the means, e.g., the £5 notes, when the end can be secured otherwise. (The exceptions will be those who have a taste for collecting useless oddities. Speaking for myself, Mr. Firmin may at that time have all my £5 notes, then as valueless as old Mark or Rouble paper money.)

We are not responsible for the reported vagaries of Mr. Bernard Shaw. Mr. Firmin would not need to BUY a cricket bat, but we assure him he could have one for his very own.

We ask our correspondent to remember that buying and selling, and the use of money as the basis of the economic activities of human society are relatively recent acquisitions. They have served their useful purpose, and the means now exist (as a result of the development of Capitalism), for society to arrange the production and distribution of wealth without the intervention of money. We do not know what Mr. Firmin sells in his little shop, nor whether he is the father of young children, but supposing that a hypothetical Tommy Firmin occasionally asks for food and clothes, etc., it is most unlikely that Mr. Firmin would insist on the production of money from members of his family (if any) before he allows them to eat or dress at his expense.

We trust that our correspondent is no

longer in a fog, but if he is, we shall be pleased to answer any further questions or criticisms. H.

SOCIALISM v. THE I.L.P.

The following is a letter from a member of the I.L.P.:—

7/10/27.

To the Editor of the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Dear Sir,

I have been very interested in the discussions contained in the "S.S." from time to time, especially between your Socialism and that of the I.L.P. I, however, fail to see any gulf between the objects of the S.P.G.B. and the I.L.P., and its kindred association. It, therefore, seems to me unfortunate that speakers of your party should be continually denouncing the representatives of working-class interests, and it would be better if they devoted their speeches entirely to making Socialists. I have before me the "S.S." of September, 1926, in which you say (page 12) that "no fundamental change in the object and policy of the I.L.P., however, is dreamt of," and later on "These champions of Nationalisation . . . would not solve the wages problem." I will, and have only the time, to deal with these two points.

(1) Firstly, "no fundamental change" is necessary, as their object is, has been and always will be, to transfer the private ownership of land and means of production, etc., into social ownership. You are at liberty to criticise their tactics, but not their object. Advice from technical and economic experts must be taken in the transformation of society, and we must be assured that this advice is in the interest of the working-classes. These experts must be, then, of the working-class.

(2) Secondly, the I.L.P. fully recognises that the wages system has got to go, and here again, the method to be adopted must be one that will not injure the class whom they desire should benefit.

(3) It is obvious to you that the so-called "living-wage" proposals, in my opinion, are held out to the masses as so much bread and butter to them under the Capitalist system, and that by intensive propaganda, more support will be given to the party in order to conquer the political machine and to use it without inflicting too great a hardship on their supporters. For instance, if in one sweep, a Socialist party abolished interest,

some of the people who would be hit the hardest are those who are trying to live on a starvation wage, plus a few shillings resulting from a small investment—say £200 5 per cent. stock. When it is a matter of principle, there must be no discrimination between one form and another.

(4) If you have any suggestion as to what a Socialist Party should do when it has been returned to power, and at the same time retain the confidence of its supporters, I should be glad to hear of it in your next issue alongside of this letter. Could you spare me the space, please?

Ruskin House,

Croydon.

I.L.P'er.

OUR REPLY.

For convenience of reply we have numbered four paragraphs with which we propose to deal.

(1) It is news to us that the I.L.P. propose to abolish private ownership. It will also be news to the I.L.P. The abolition of private ownership would involve the abolition of all forms of living by owning property, i.e., rent, interest and profit. Asked as recently as August whether the I.L.P. proposed to abolish "rent, interest and profit," Mr. E. E. Hunter, Secretary of the I.L.P. Information and Research Department, replied in an official letter, dated August 22nd:—

"Many Socialists are in favour of their complete abolition, while others have held the view that complete abolition is not desirable." (Of course, when Mr. Hunter writes "Socialists," he means here "members of the I.L.P.")

The "Socialist Programme" published by the I.L.P. (1923) is more definite. Under the heading "A Socialist Programme for Industry," it says (page 24):—

"The present shareholders in mines and railways could receive State mines or railway stock based on a valuation and bearing a fixed rate of interest."

Mr. J. R. MacDonald, in his "Socialism, Critical and Constructive" (page 274) says:

"When Labour uses capital and pays its market value, property is defensible . . ."

This may be the aim of "I.L.P'er," but it is decidedly not Socialism.

(2) The I.L.P. will be equally surprised to learn that it proposes to abolish the wages system. The constitution adopted at the 1922 Annual Conference states under

"Political and Industrial Democracy," that the "basis of industrial democracy must be the organisation of the wage and salary earners." (See the "Story of the I.L.P.," page 20.)

(3) "I.L.P'er" believes he knows why the I.L.P. advocates its "Living Wage Policy." We do not know that, but we do know that Socialism is not going to be introduced by a political party which has been placed in power for some other purpose by electors who are not Socialist. If "I.L.P'er" will recall the administration of Capitalism by the Labour Party in 1924, or the experience of various Labour Governments (e.g., New South Wales in September of this year) he will perceive that when electors find themselves deceived by a political party which fails to carry out its promises, or which goes beyond its mandate, they express their disapproval by voting against it at the first opportunity. It is interesting also to recall that the Labour Party in office appealed to the miners not to embarrass it by asking for more wages, and threatened striking transport workers with the Emergency Powers Act. That seems to us to be a curious way of expressing the I.L.P.'s enthusiasm for a living wage. (As well over 50 per cent. of the Labour M.P.'s at that time were I.L.P. members, the I.L.P. is fully accountable for all of the anti-working class actions of MacDonald's Ministry.)

(4) "I.L.P'er" here overlooks the important point that Socialist Party candidates will only be elected to the House of Commons on a Socialist Programme (not on a programme of Capitalist reforms), by a Socialist electorate (not by electors who want a living wage, or family endowment, etc., etc.) and for the single purpose of establishing Socialism. The only way of retaining the confidence of a Socialist electorate will be to work for Socialism just as it is now true that the only way I.L.P. M.P.'s can retain the confidence of their non-Socialist electorates is to work for everything other than Socialism. If Socialist M.P.'s fail to do the work for which they are elected, the voters will get rid of them at the first opportunity.

H.

EAST HAM.

EAST HAM, Manor Park and Barking sympathisers are invited to attend the newly-formed branch at East Ham, which meets at 1, Tyrone Road on Wednesdays at 8 p.m. Come and strengthen the new branch.

HERO WORSHIP.

A Conversation with a Visitor from Mars.

The first Friday in every month, I receive in my small suburban house a distinguished and eminently intellectual visitor from Mars. Where I met this worthy gentleman, in what contrivance he effects his journey to Earth, and how he mastered the English tongue, I must not divulge for I am bound to secrecy on all these points. Yet I cannot forbear from recording the conversations which have taken place between us. My friend's remarkable criticisms of worldly institutions concerning which his mind is free from prejudices and accepted opinions, his sage interpellations and remarks, and, above all, his insatiable curiosity which has prompted me to explore and examine many aspects and phases of human life, have changed me from a meek peruser of a daily paper (the name of which rhymes with "Wail") to an eager and regular reader of a certain Socialist monthly journal.

However, on Friday, August —, the Martian entered my study, and after inquiring as to the state of my feet (in the usual Martian way), proceeded to make himself comfortable in my best arm-chair, and fixed me with his relentless inquisitive gaze. I groaned inwardly for I realised that I was doomed to the usual merciless inquisition; nevertheless, batting him playfully over the bean, I exclaimed, "Marty, old son, your little top-knot must be full of vague wonderings and misgivings again; pray unload them to your kind uncle." He did so to the following effect—

"Esteemed and respected friend, in the course of my peregrinations and observations here below, I have noticed with astonishment that there are always various and differing individuals exalted above their fellows, and that these individuals either through accident of birth, ridiculous actions, criminal deeds or (occasionally) illustrious achievements, are regarded with almost divine reverence by their fellow-men. Now I plainly see that the conditions on this wretched planet foster and nourish this primitive "hero-worship"; ignorance, of course, induces men to believe in the super-human powers of others higher up in the social scale, and the ignorant, aware of their own pitiful mental condition and limitations, behold with awe and amazement the petty achievements of a slightly more developed brain, moreover, 'hero-worship' is cer-

tainly aroused and nourished by your noxious newspapers. Sir, in a solitary issue of one of your vile dope-sheets I read glowing eulogies of individuals dubbed 'princes,' 'duchesses,' and 'ladies,' sticky journalese accounts of 'the world's greatest cricketer,' 'the greatest soldier of to-day,' 'Hollywood's daintiest actress,' and even longer accounts of poor miserable wretches, who, warped by environment and damned by heredity, have committed atrocious crimes.

"But —" here the Martian jumped to his feet in his excitement and indignation, "I hear not a word except of detraction or abuse about the great masses of manual and brain workers by whose labour alone the social machinery is kept going, and I laugh aloud when I hear the results of economic conditions attributed to the 'energy' or the 'wisdom' of great men. Now, sir," continued the Martian, looking at me dubiously. "I assume you know something concerning the origin, development, and effects of this hero-worship cult—pray enlighten me."

Gracefully placing a lozenge in my mouth and coughing importantly, I spoke as follows:—

"Mankind, Marty, until quite recently, was in the main unaware of the quantitative or qualitative laws of physical causation, and natural phenomena were invariably attributed to supernatural agencies: and, sad to relate, even in the year A.D. 1927, very few mortals can interpret *sociological* phenomena scientifically. Thus it is not strange that the course of civilisation is considered as little else than a mere story of remarkable individuals and their actions. Last century, a rhetorical wind-bag by the name of Thomas Carlyle, expressed this opinion in the following words:—

"As I take it, universal history, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the history of the great men who have lived here."

"Marty, old boy, pass me Spencer's 'Study of Sociology'."

The Martian did so, and I read aloud the following:—

"Round the camp-fires assembled savages tell the events of the day's chase; and he among them who has done some feat of skill or agility is duly lauded. On a return from the war-path the sagacity of the chief and the strength or courage of this or that warrior, are the all-absorbing

themes. When the day or the immediate past affords no remarkable deed, the topic is the achievement of some noted leader recently dead . . ."

"That is a rather vague idea of the origin of 'hero-worship,'" remarked the Martian; "would you favour me with a more detailed account?"

"In primitive human societies of the 'totemistic' or 'savage' type," I began, "private property, except for small personal belongings, was, in the main, unknown, and land, boats, fishing-nets, tents, etc., were generally the property of the tribe in common. Such societies provided little scope for 'heroes'; nevertheless, the germ of 'hero-worship' was in being, as is shown by the fact that among the aborigines of Australia at certain times, ceremonial dances and songs are indulged in (under the direction of the 'Biraark' or witch-doctor), in which great events in the 'Alcheringa' or distant past are commemorated, and ancient heroes are extolled. Moreover, the witch-doctor in these savage organisations often encourages hero-worship and plays upon the supernatural dreads of the tribesmen."

At this juncture, I noticed that Marty seemed to be dozing.

"Are you asleep?" I exclaimed peevishly.

"Not at all," rejoined the Martian, blandly. "I can always think better with my eyes closed."

I continued:—

"The second stage of social development is called the Patriarchal society, and in this social organisation 'hero-worship' was much practised and encouraged. In the Patriarchal stage, *paternity* is the leading fact, and men are counted relatives because they are descended from the same *male ancestor*. This fact led to the adoration of, and the glamour of, romance, which gradually enveloped the ancestors of the different tribes; in fact, Marty, even now, in the East, *ancestor-worship* is the basis of religion. In the Patriarchal stage, hero-worship is essentially the common root of music, of drama, of poetry, and other miscellaneous types of literature. This is evident whether you scan the Bible, the Iliad, or the old Celtic legends. The Old Testament, Marty, is a wonderful galaxy of personalities—many of whom, incidentally, are not the patterns of virtue so regularly assumed. We are told how Abraham (after the necessary precaution of girding up his loins) journeyed to such

and such a place according to the Master's orders, and how Daniel (without the aid of a saucer of milk) showed his prowess as a lion-tamer. Jewish institutions and customs on the whole merely creep in to add colour to the biographies of the 'great men.' The old heroes were certainly revered and scoffers at the 'great men' were summarily dealt with. In Homer's 'Iliad,' one Thersites, addicted to the dangerous habit of thinking for himself, foolishly questions the orders and opinions of the chiefs — his answer comes in the form of a lusty swipe from the sceptre of Ulysses."

"But," asked the Martian, "were there no writers or thinkers who saw that the 'worship' of the heroes was due to the accumulation of false and supernatural tales?"

I pondered for a moment, and then answered—

"Yes, much later in the early 2nd century A.D., Lucian held up to ridicule the gods and the old heroes in witty little burlesques, in which Jupiter, Hercules and the like, become little more than buffoons. But the voice of Lucian was 'drowned in the hubbub of the book market,' where the hero, boosting works of Pausanias, Ovid, Pindar and Euhemerus held undisputed sway encouraged by the ruling class and their literary sycophants."

"By the way, my friend," said the Martian, "here's a little thought about these 'great men' of your world. The origin of a 'great man' is, I suppose, *natural*, and thus I submit he should be placed with the other phenomena which brought him forth, as the product of environment and heredity, that is *the product of conditions*. The offspring of two Chinese is never a Red Indian, and the son of a black reared in darkest Africa is hardly likely to become a great philosopher or dramatist. I mean, my friend, that the 'great man' only arrives under conditions favourable to his appearance. But please continue about the development of hero-worship after the Patriarchal stage."

I did so.

"Sad to say, Marty, the origin of the State or Political Society coincides with the development of the *art of warfare*. Centuries before the decline of the Roman Empire, the drying-up of the lakes and rivers in Central Asia compelled the inhabitants of N.W. Mongolia and E. Turkestan to press westward into the broad valleys and push for-

ward the original inhabitants of the plains; thus stems upon stems were thrown into Europe. Later, the increase of population and the desire to plunder the riches of the husbandman and the craftsman led these numerous Germanic tribes to wage war upon the more civilised societies. Thus a society dependent on great war-lords arose, and the fighting units of the society became bound by bonds of loyalty and obedience to their chief. This form of society gave a great impetus to 'hero-worship,' because the examples of former warriors were cited in order to stir the spirits of the youths, the adventurous life itself gave abundant opportunities for mighty deeds of valour, and, moreover, after a time, the causes of the wars seemed in the eyes of the wagers to be romantic and noble rather than economic. Then, when the host-leaders obtained permanent control of a definite territory, states evolved, while the life of the community remained essentially one of *military allegiance*. This is the age of Chivalric Romance. The alleged deeds of the great war-lords in the earlier period were made into songs which were sung at the courts of great nobles by wandering minstrels."

Then, taking "Romance and Legend of Chivalry," by Hope Moncrieff, from my book-case, I read aloud the following:—

"Chivalry which found an organisation in the feudal system and a consecration in the wars of the Crusade, had its origin in the robust Teuton stock that mainly overspread the downfall of the Roman Empire. Tales of chivalry abounded everywhere," I continued, "and in particular the legends connected with Arthur and Charlemagne increased and spread all over Europe. It was Cervantes in 'Don Quixote' who gave the death-blow to the last lingering regard for romances of heroes which had become truly pitiful in their total disregard for worldly possibilities."

"Surely they were never so ridiculously idealistic and false to worldly life as are the 'best-sellers' of to-day?" interposed the Martian.

"More so, Marty, my lad. Our Ethel M. Dell's could learn much from these later romances! However, the 'hero cult' thus fostered by literature and encouraged at the courts became enveloped in innumerable conventions, and not a few hypocrisies, and thus the Middle Ages became the epoch of chivalry. The 'ennobling' hero-worship and

theoretical condescending regard for women ('high-born') which were the two leading features of chivalry, did not prevent the scions of 'noble' families from dealing with insubordinate peasants in the way Ulysses dealt with Thersites, and in France particularly, the 'chivalrous' nobles maintained this attitude towards their providers till the Revolution of 1789. In the 'epoch of Chivalry,' also, Marty, occurred what is popularly assumed to be an essentially romantic and 'heroic' war—the Hundred Years' War. But this war was fought primarily not because of the heroic qualities of Edward III, the Black Prince, Henry V or Joan of Arc, but owed its origin to *economic* reasons. In short, the Hundred Years' War was the struggle of England to prevent Flanders from falling under French domination, and thus ruining England's wool trade with the Flemish manufacturing towns; as Thorold Rogers says, "From the 13th to the 16th century, wool was King."*

"Now in modern times, Marty, a very curious conception of a 'hero' has arisen. In the chivalric period, the 'hero' was necessarily a man of 'renowned' and 'noble' stock, with 100 per cent. blue blood in his veins, and a son of the soil, who took it into his head to perform deeds of valour, would never be regarded as more than a 'good common soldier.' Traces of the adoration of the 'high-born hero' can still be seen in the enthusiasm awakened in childish minds by the movements of 'aristocratic' nonentities, whilst in rubbishy literature, the story of the brave penniless youth who turns out to be the heir of a piffling kingdom, of which the geographical locality is not specified, still has a considerable though declining popularity. But, Marty, the rise of the bourgeois state gave birth to a 'hero' of a different type. He is the man who is 'master of his fate'; he is the man who sweeps aside all obstacles that stand in his way to success; he scoffs at prejudices and customs; often he performs his 'wonders' by proxy, but in that case this is the 'organising brain'; always he emerges victorious from the fight with circumstances: in short, Marty, the 'hero' of our time is the 'self-made man.' By far the greatest of this modern type of 'hero' is Napoleon Bonaparte. H. G. Wells, with his typical bourgeois self-satisfaction, pours wholesale con-

* Economic Interpretation of History.

† See Trotsky's "Lenin," chapter 8.

tempt upon the mental and social qualities of Bonaparte. He points out that his notebooks, crammed full with miscellaneous and unconnected observations, show little of a great brain; he states that Napoleon is not known to have had a single genuine friend, and he asserts (with considerable justification) that historical evidence points to the fact that all his actions primarily sprung from egotistical impulses. The very success of Napoleon's career, however, gives the answer to Wells' unwritten insinuation that Bonaparte compared with the talented writer of 'The Outline of History' would cut a very insignificant intellectual figure. Also we must distrust Wells' valuations of the abilities of others, when we consider his condescending attitude towards Lenin in an interview generously granted by the Russian in the busy time of the winter of 1920-21.†

To be continued.

W.J.

A PUBLIC DEBATE

will be held at the

Stratford Town Hall,

ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 13th,

between E. HARDY,
(Representing S.P.G.B.)

and MAJOR H. J. GILLESPIE, D.S.O.,
(Representing The Economic League).

SUBJECT—

"That the practice of Capitalism has benefited the workers, is continually being improved in the light of experience, and should be continued."

Doors open 7 p.m.

Commencing 7.30 p.m.

ADMISSION FREE.

NOTE.

A Review of three books by Rizianov and Bucharin, published by Martin Laurence (of Bedford Row, W.C.) will appear in next issue.

S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS LONDON DISTRICT.

Sundays: Highbury Corner, 11.15 a.m.
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.
Victoria Park, 4 p.m.
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.
Paddington, Prince of Wales, 11.30 a.m.
Bethnal Green, opposite Salmon and Ball, 7.30 p.m.

Mondays: Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.
Becontree, Burnside Road, and Green Lanes, 8 p.m.

Wednesdays: Hackney, Paragon Rd. and Mare St. 8 p.m.

Fridays: Clerkenwell, Almeida St., Upper St., N., 8 p.m.
West Ham, Water Lane 8 p.m.
Leyton, James Lane, High Road, 8 p.m.

HANLEY BRANCH MEETINGS.

Sundays: Hanley, Market Square, 7 p.m.
Burslem, St. John's Square, 7 p.m.

BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury-road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.
- BECONTREE.**—Sec., S. Cash, 32, Greenway. Public invited.
- BETHNAL GREEN.**—Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m., at 2, Co-operative Buildings, 361, Bethnal Green-rd., E.2. Sec., D. Jacobs, at above address.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec. E. Jesper, 38, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.
- CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Sec., at above address.
- EAST LONDON.**—Sec., A. Jacobs, 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.
- EAST HAM.**—Branch meets at 1, Tyrone-road, East Ham. Wednesdays at 8 p.m. Communications. Sec. at above address.
- EDINBURGH.**—Sec., 15, Barclay-place, Edinburgh.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Saturdays, 7 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare-street, Hackney. Branch Business 1st and 3rd Saturdays. Discussions 2nd and 4th Saturdays. Sec. at above address.
- HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock St., Hanley, Staffs.
- HULL.**—Branch meetings, Tuesday, at 8 p.m., at the Trade and Labour Club (Jarratt-street entrance). Discussion after meeting. All readers in Hull requested to attend.
- ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sister-rd., Holloway, N. Sec., M. Baker, 18, Orpingley-rd., N.7.
- LEYTON.**—Sec., A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.
- MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park-street, Salford, Manchester.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 7.45 p.m. at 114, Duke St., Stretford-road.
- PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn-lane, W.9 (side door).
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- TOOTING.**—Sec., 15, University-road, Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt-lane, S.W. 17.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary 22, Dunloe-ave., N.15. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

WATFORD.—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

WEST HAM.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No. 280. Vol. 24.]

LONDON, DECEMBER, 1927.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN SOVIET RUSSIA.

Owing to the deplorable suppression of opinion and rigid censorship of news in Russia it is well nigh as difficult now to obtain reliable information as it was 10 years ago when the censorship was that erected by the Allied Governments. The policy of suppression is always deplorable and usually utterly useless for the end it has in view. Where there is smoke there is fire. Where there are the economic conditions for class conflict there will inevitably arise the discontent of the ruled class with the ruling class and its agents, followed by spontaneous attempts to organise for the removal of the cause of the discontent. It is impossible in the long run to prevent the individual members of a class with a grievance drawing the same general conclusions from the same set of facts. It is possible to delay the spread of ideas from one to another, but not to prohibit it for all time. In the last resort, if class demands are ignored or suppressed, there will inevitably arise organised movements to enforce them, peaceably if possible, but violently if need be. Suppression cannot prevent discontent, it can only direct it into secret and more destructive channels.

These elementary lessons of political history were forgotten in the turmoil following the Bolshevik seizure of power. Suppression of the voting rights, newspapers, and political organisations of the landowners and capitalists, led naturally to the similar treatment of every opponent and critic not only of the acts, but also of the persons of the governing party. The culminating point is the exclusion and threatened criminal prosecution of Trotsky and other once honoured revolutionaries. (One of the charges against Trotsky is the fatuous one of "in-

solence.") This degradation into the methods of royalty, with their major crime of "*lèse majesté*," is the normal course of all such suppression.

We are then compelled to seek for information about events in Russia, either in the columns of the official Communist Press (where it is naturally coloured in favour of the official point of view as against the critics), or else piece together the fragmentary reports smuggled out of Russia and reprinted (usually with exaggerations) in the opposition journals abroad or the capitalist newspapers.

For two years or more Trotsky has been the figurehead round whom various opposition groups have centred inside the Russian Communist Party. His main criticism appears to be based on his view of an old subject of controversy, that is whether it is possible to build up Socialism in Russia alone. Trotsky, like ourselves, says no. Russia, in his opinion, must aim at rapid industrialisation (with the aid of foreign capital but prohibiting, as far as possible, any foreign control), thus building up a numerous working class in Russia. At present the Russian workers represent at most 15 per cent. of the population, being hopelessly outnumbered by peasants, the great majority of whom are quite naturally more interested in maintaining and extending their private ownership of land than in Socialism. The development of Russian industry will, Trotsky argues, enable the Russian workers to withstand the reactionary pressure of the peasants until such time as the world working class come to their aid.

At present, so the opposition maintain, the trend of Government policy in Russia is

steadily in favour of the peasants as against the workers. If this is so, then sooner or later working class discontent will manifest itself in organisation and attempted resistance, at least to the extent that the Russian workers understand their class position and have not been deceived by propaganda aimed at obscuring the fundamental conflict of interests between the workers, on the one side, and the peasants and capitalist traders and concessionaires, on the other. In justification of his view Trotsky maintains that the Russian workers and their trade unions are rapidly developing an attitude of hostility towards the Russian State, the relations with which being more and more clearly recognised as the normal capitalist relations between employers and employed.

The *Manchester Guardian* (November 15th) summarises a German translation of Trotsky's programme which has been published in Hamburg. The following passages are taken from it and may help readers to understand the meaning of the present conflict. It is, of course, to be understood that this reproduction of Trotsky's views is not an indication that we can guarantee the accuracy of his estimates of conditions, nor that we share all his views on policy:—

A new bourgeoisie of bureaucrats and of private traders is emerging in the towns and of kulaks (wealthier peasants) in the country, while industrial labour is losing its share in the management both of the Communist party and of the workshops and factories. Since October, 1925, the upward movement of real wages has ceased, although the output per man has risen by no less than 15 per cent. At the same time the rights and privileges of the managements and of the administration have grown.

The increase in employment stopped this year, and there has been a big and rapid increase in unemployment. For two years the prices of industrial products have been nominally stable, but in reality they are rising, for the quality of the goods (especially manufactured goods) has conspicuously deteriorated. Wholesale prices have risen steadily since July, 1925, while the quality of wholesale articles has likewise deteriorated. Retail prices sank in 1924 and 1925, but rose again in 1926, and are now (if the inferior quality is considered) roughly as they were in 1923.

The increased output of Russian industry has been accompanied by a deterioration of plant and machinery, and a steady increase in the number of accidents in the factories has resulted.

Although wages are not rising, the so-called intensification of labour is being steadily forced by the authorities. The maximum output of the most efficient workman is being made the standard for all. The sifting out and rejection of the more inefficient men is going on with ever-grow-

ing rigour, while the wages for piece work are not rising, and in some cases are sinking. Wages are at best no higher than they were before the war. Industry is worse equipped now than it was then, but the output per man is considerably greater.

Thus the wear and tear on the health and constitution of the individual workman is very great. Low wages do not allow workmen to enjoy tolerable housing. The amount of room space allowed to each family is steadily diminishing. The reintroduction of 40 per cent. vodka has injured the health of the working classes, especially of the younger generation, and has increased the number of accidents. State revenues from the sale of alcohol are being won at heavy cost in human misery.

Economy in the factories is being enforced with growing severity. A system of penalties has been introduced under which a workman is dismissed if he arrives a minute late. Men who report sick are now assigned to so-called light labour and health insurance benefit is refused on the slightest pretext. Overtime is increasing in spite of the vast unemployment. Special labour is growing more frequent. Regular workers who cannot legally be dismissed without a fortnight's notice are got rid of by being dismissed and then being re-engaged as casual workers after which they can be dismissed at one, two, or three days' notice.

The power of the management is steadily growing. It has the exclusive right of dismissal for default or misdemeanours, and no appeal is possible. Men are also engaged by the management, the function of the factory Soviets being limited to mere registration. The workmen no longer share in the control and management of these factories. Their opinion and criticism are disregarded more and more. Conditions in the factories are again approaching what they were in Tsarist times.

The workmen are becoming indifferent or even hostile to the trade unions. Meetings are poorly attended, embryonic illegal unions have come into existence when illegal strike committees are formed (that is to say, when there is a strike, the men having lost confidence in the official Communist trade union organisations, form a secret strike committee of their own). The struggle of Russian labour for better conditions is being conducted either in disregard of the trade unions and of the Communist party, or sometimes even against them. The election of trade union officials has become a mere formality; workmen join these unions because they cannot obtain employment without a membership card.

The Soviet State and system is undemocratic. Members of the Government and of the administration are not elected but selected. The electorate is denied the right to recall its delegates, whilst the Communist bureaucracy has the right to get rid of any delegate whom it does not like without regard for the opinion of those who voted for him, nor are the delegates themselves in the least responsible to the electorate. For the working-class balloting has become an empty formality and an irksome obligation.

The prestige of the Soviet has sunk so low in the eyes of Russian Labour, that the authori-

ties sometimes use compulsion so as to make the workmen vote at all.

The "Proletariat Opposition" within the party is being expelled. In the factory "cells" only favoured persons receive promotion, and those in disfavour are degraded or even dismissed. There is a growing army of Oppositional unemployed. Dissatisfaction is being suppressed and hushed up, and there has been an epidemic of suicides.

The broad Communist masses are excluded from some of the most vital discussions of the party leaders. The Communist bureaucracy exercises an uncontrolled and irresponsible domination.

Relations between the workmen and the management are becoming more and more what they were before the revolution.

The *Manchester Guardian's* correspondent states that the memorandum goes on to give a similar analysis of conditions in the rural areas, where the poorer peasants and the agricultural labourers are exploited by the wealthier peasants, whose power is increasing.

Among the points in Trotsky's programme, the most important is the restoration of democracy within the Communist Party, which would, among other things, make impossible the suppression of such a document as the one quoted above. H.

CAMBERWELL BRANCH.

A new Branch of the Party has been formed recently in the London district of Camberwell.

All sympathisers of the party living in the adjoining districts of Peckham and Brixton are invited to look in at the Branch meeting-room ANY Friday evening after 8 o'clock. The room is situated next to the main entrance to the Camberwell Public Baths (main entrance Church Street, Camberwell).

The Secretary's address is:

J. Goodfellow,
40, Solon New Road,
Clapham, S.W.,

to whom all enquiries should be addressed.

Branch headquarters are very conveniently situated and suitable for the discussions (open to the public) which will be a feature of these Friday evenings. J. G.

A LECTURE

WILL BE GIVEN AT

EDMONTON TOWN HALL

ON

Sunday, December 18th.

Questions and Discussion.

Admission Free.

ARMISTICE REFLECTIONS.

It is Armistice night. I have just come home through London along with a portion of the joyful crowds who are going to celebrate. But what are they celebrating? It cannot be the end of wars since expenditure on armaments still grows, and the "East" and the "West" harries the imaginations of diplomats. Is it a victory they would celebrate? But here are a million unemployed, and the miners are marching on London to remind legislators that hunger is abroad in the coalfields.

As I travelled on 'bus and tube my mind wandered over the events of the war and since. The petty squabbles of war "leaders," military, naval, and political, who each tried to keep a grip on the shoddy coat of glory; the nobleness of purpose with which each saddled the other with incapacity. I tried to think of a leader who possessed the military virtues we were taught to revere when we were children—and I failed to think of one. Even the modesty of Lawrence is lost in a crowd of full-dress photographs taken in the waste places of Arabia. A few short years have stripped the idols, one by one, of the gilding a venal Press and a hypocritical platform painted on with such a lavish hand.

The enemies of wartime have again become the joint partners in the plunder of peacetime. German, Austrian, Italian, French, American and English shareholders are indiscriminately mixed in the giant companies and trusts that take from the workman of different lands all that he produces above the pittance that pretends to keep him.

While the crowds passed before the Cenotaph to-day those who had grown wealthier out of war and peace swept in their luxurious cars to the palaces built out of the blood and toil of slaves. Behind all the mockery and cynicism lie the devastated homes, the cheerless hearths, of millions of the poor. The hollow shams at the top and the bitter misery at the bottom; the trickery and the illusions; the romance and the reality.

The tragedies of the war existed not only in the deaths, the mutilations, and the sorrows of the bereaved, but also in what lay behind much of it. Imagine the feelings of those forced, by fear of a white feather or by conscription, who went to battle without enthusiasm but with much dread. They had to endure the manifold hardships without the

inner fire of a cause worth while to sustain them. Of such were many who are buried in nameless graves.

Most of us, particularly the more imaginative, when not drunk with enthusiasm or liquor, suffer the nameless dread of mutilation or death. Thousands, nay millions, went through this agony during those terrible years. Of the young and the old of many countries eight and a half millions were killed, twenty-one millions wounded. This country alone had a million dead to mourn for and two millions wounded.

But what are the celebrations for? What have the millions died for? Why do many an old couple sit by the fire dreaming sadly of what might have been? Oh, sordid reality! Oh, cold, comfortless truth! Because one group of money bugs wanted more profit than another! For this the flower of youth was trampled and destroyed by the iron heel of war. And even now, while the horror and dread of those days still stirs restlessly in the mind, like the remnants of the spell of a nightmare, the nations of the earth are still hotly pursuing each other in a headlong race to more terrible wars still, though the wiser ones foresee that the end is not worth the price, in wealth and prestige, that will have to be paid.

And those who so easily sent our loved ones to their graves are niggardly in payment to the mutilated and the dependants. They groan of the height of the taxes, and tell fairy tales of the wealth of the pensioners. They would have us believe, as they orate at their many-coursed dinners, that they are really too poor to stand the strain. When unemployment was widespread before the war it was said that the country was too poor to maintain the human scrap heap of industry. Yet, on the war alone, this country was able to throw away wealth to the amount of over six thousand million pounds in four years! And this while millions of the population were entirely withdrawn from productive work.

And to-day those who might ponder over these things and be dangerous to the powers that prey have their emotions diverted into safe channels. They are given a few cenotaphs, a few processions, a turgid mass of hypocritical sentiments. They mourn by cold monuments and return to work sad, but satisfied.

What a civilisation! What a tragedy!
GILMAC.

HOUSING REFORM EXAMINED.

AN ILLUSTRATION FROM VIENNA.

The housing problem is—for the workers—neither new, nor limited to any one country.

It existed before the War and exists still, despite the much-advertised efforts which have been made by the post-war Governments all over Europe. In essence the problem is simple. The workers cannot afford to pay rents high enough to make the building of houses a profitable undertaking for the capitalist building concerns, and even when the municipalities or the Government step in they are faced with the choice either to let their houses at rents less than sufficient to meet the cost, have them unoccupied, or else overcrowded with two or more families. In the "New Leader" (October 21st) there appeared an article by an Austrian writer, Olga Misar, bestowing high praise upon the Austrian Labour Party for the housing policy which they have carried out on the Municipal Council of Vienna. They have built some 25,000 working-class dwellings and have thereby greatly reduced the pressure on accommodation which immediately after the War was probably worse than in any other European city.

The writer points out that whereas in pre-war days the Viennese worker had to pay away about 25 per cent. of his wages as rent, the present proportion is only about 2 or 3 per cent. A man with £2 per week wages, instead of paying 10s. rent, now pays only about 1s.

If this is true, does not the Austrian Labour Party fully deserve the praise which Olga Misar showers on them?

In fact, however, this is only part of the story. Other information is contained in an Austrian Labour Party pamphlet, "Die Wohnungspolitik der Gemeinde Wien (1926)" (Housing Policy of the Vienna Municipality), which very admirably illustrates the soundness of the Socialist opposition to the advocacy of reforms.

True, rents are proportionally less, but SO ARE WAGES. What has happened is as follows:

Seventy per cent. of the production of the Austrian factories is for export, but as Austria has few sources of raw materials or fuel, she must import them at world prices. Faced with the problem of exporting manufactured goods in competition with big and better equipped German, English and Ameri-

can industries, and lacking the capital to re-equip their factories on modern up-to-date lines, the only solution for the Austrian capitalists was to lower wages, and at the same time, if possible, increase the efficiency of their workers.

By the almost complete elimination of rent from the expenditure of working-class households, wages could be and have been reduced without sacrificing the indispensable minimum of food, clothing, etc., necessary to maintain their working powers.

That this is a correct view of the situation is confirmed by a report published by the International Labour Office of the League of Nations. The report says:—

The item of expenditure on rent in working-class budgets was reduced to practically nothing; in July, 1923, it was barely 1 per cent. of the total expenditure of a working-class family, whereas before the war it might be estimated at about 20 per cent.

The change, however, directly benefited certain classes of workers only. But this applied only to unskilled wage earners in a few industries. Most of the workers were in the same position as those of Germany; they had practically no liabilities under the heading of rent, but the corresponding amount was not included in their wages. The actual gain was thus nil.

Industry, on the other hand, benefited, as in Germany, by the reduction in the cost of most labour by the full amount which rent represented in wages before the war. (The Workers' Standard of Life in countries with depreciated currency. International Labour Office, Geneva, 1925, p. 97.)

The nett result is that the efficiency of the workers has been maintained or increased by the added comfort and contentedness promoted by better and less-crowded housing accommodation than would have been supplied by private capitalist builders.

And since this could not be carried through as a financially self-supporting scheme it has been financed at the expense of the Austrian landlords, by means of heavy house and rent taxes levied on landlords money was raised by the Municipality to build and subsidise working-class dwellings.

In short, the landlords have been plundered by the Labour Party in order to subsidise the export trade of the Austrian factory owners. The workers pay less rent, receive wages which are correspondingly less than before, and give better service.

The "successful" Labour housing policy is then just part of the sectional struggle between exporting and landowning capitalists.

Even so, there remains the question of the better housing accommodation. It will be said that this at least is a gain to the workers. True, but did it need a "Labour" majority to secure that incidental gain, and is the securing of it a justification for the policy of fighting for reforms of the capitalist system?

It was in the interest of the manufacturers to have their employees well housed, contented and efficient. Henry Ford, Bournville, and Port Sunlight are instances of the care taken by more progressive capitalists to ensure that the home conditions of their workers do not militate against their efficiency as wealth producers; and the activities of almost every government (including the Austrian Central Government) in the direction of restricting rents or of building or subsidising houses, show that they will not neglect their own interests as an employing class. Instead of allowing themselves to be used as the instruments of a section of the capitalist class, the party of the workers should concentrate on the very necessary and at present largely neglected task of demonstrating the impossibility of solving the poverty problem inside the capitalist system.

H.

WEST HAM.

LECTURES

AT
Engineers' Institute, Romford Road

ON
December 4th and December 11th
ADMISSION FREE.

BATTERSEA.

A LECTURE

By COMRADE E. LAKE

THE OUTCOME OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE.

WILL BE GIVEN AT
BATTERSEA TOWN HALL (Lower Hall),
On Sunday, December 4th, at 7.30 p.m.
QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION. ADMISSION FREE

MONEY AND PRICE.**A CRITICISM AND A REPLY.**

Sir,—I am of the opinion that A. E. Jacomb, writing under the heading of "Should we Produce More" (S.S., Oct. 1927) makes serious blunders in his economics. He says: "Let us take the employed workmen in a community as one thousand, let us reduce their varied products to a common form, which we call 'wares,' and finally let us suppose that the price of each of those wares is £1, and it is the product of one man's labour for a day. We have the following condition of affairs as the result of the day's effort:—

Workers 1,000; Wares, 1,000; Price, £1,000.

Now suppose that from some cause each worker doubles his day's output, the figures then would be:—

Workers, 1,000; Wares, 2,000; Price £2,000."

Now I have always understood since I became acquainted with Marxian political economy that Price is the monetary expression of exchange value. That goods exchange for goods and that price was merely an indication of the relative value of each commodity to the amount of gold contained in the £1 sterling. Gold does not determine the price any more than a ruler determines the length of the object measured. Like other commodities, gold has value also price, and is subject to the same laws that apply to them. In fact one might as logically say that wheat determines the price of other goods. The reason why gold is adopted as a standard is its portability, the fact that it does not deteriorate in storage, and that on the average it is less subject to market fluctuations. The Labour Power necessary to produce a given quantity of gold is pretty constant from one year to another. Certainly the discovery of fresh deposits and the introduction of the cyanide process and modern crushing plant has reduced the value of gold which coupled with the fact that it no longer functions as coinage brings supply in excess of demand and a consequent fall in price. But to take A. E. Jacomb's analogy we must accept the notion that inflation of the currency was responsible for the rise in prices during the war period and since.

I will now take Value and Price (Marx). Value is determined by the amount of socially necessary Labour Power embodied. Price equals Exchange Value, i.e., the relative amount of socially necessary labour power embodied plus the factor of supply and demand. Therefore it follows that if I have 2,000 wares the value of which, assuming that fixed capital is halved as well as variable capital in their production, is just that of 1,000 produced under the old conditions. Of a necessity they must ultimately saturate the market and price will fall below value and will actually exchange at an adverse price. Assuming that the process of production is extended to every other commodity the exchange, i.e., Price remains at par.

Foreign exchange will show how A. E. Jacomb falls. For instance, say, the £1 is quoted at 4.86 to the dollar, it has nothing to do with the amount of gold in either, but the amount of goods that each will buy in their own country. Gold is a mere detail compared to

other values created. The amount held by the Banks only fractionally covers the paper in circulation, i.e., Treasury and Bank Notes. Commerce operates by Cheque, Bill or Draft—a mere book transaction. It could not be done by a transference of gold, without half of the population being engaged in gold extraction. Bullion transactions are but adjustments. In the short compass of a letter I cannot deal with every detail of A. E. Jacomb's article, but may do so later, if allowed.—Yours fraternally,

F. L. RIMINGTON.

REPLY TO RIMINGTON.

I showed that the result of *all* wares, *including gold*, being produced at half the labour cost would be that prices remain the same. My critic says I am wrong. Yet he himself states: "Assuming that the process of production is extended to every other commodity, the exchange, i.e., price, remains at par." Notwithstanding, then, that I am wrong and my critic right, we both say the same thing, and are in entire agreement so far.

However, Mr. Rimington did not know when to stop. He was safe enough while he was repeating the present scribe, but when he let go of his hand he was soon floundering in the mud. "Gold," he says, "has value, also price," and later tells us that gold supply is in excess of demand, and there is a "consequent fall in price."

Gold has price, has it! Then how is it expressed? "Price," my friend correctly states, "is the monetary expression of value." What, then, is the monetary expression of money? To say that the price of 1,000 bricks is £3 is an intelligent statement; but to say that the price of the gold in £3 is £3 is idiocy. It adds nothing to our knowledge. An ounce of gold is coined into money expressed by the figures £3 17s. 10½d. It does not matter how the value of gold fluctuates, the amount of gold expressed by those figures is always the same—one ounce. If, then, £3 17s. 10½d. is the price of one ounce of gold, how is the fall in price to which my critic refers expressed? If the figures are not the price, what is?

Price is an endeavour to equate one kind of commodity to a different commodity (gold), not one to its like; and since all prices are in terms of gold, gold is the only commodity which has no price, and *can* have none. If silver was the standard of price, then gold *could* have a price.

Mr. Rimington's statement that commerce could not operate "by a transference of gold, without half of the population being engaged in gold extraction," is another ridiculous assertion. The idea is, of course, that for every commodity which is not gold the golden equivalent must exist in order to enable it to exchange. If every piece of gold that was exchanged for a commodity dropped out of circulation when the commodity did he might be correct. But what would become, will my critic tell us, of the golden equivalent of a hundred loaves of bread when the latter were consumed? Would the gold be consumed also? Or would it be free to serve as the medium of further exchanges?

It is difficult to get to the back of Mr. Rimington's mind, but he appears to imply that high general prices since the war are the result of the supply of gold being in excess of demand. Strangely enough, however, when prices were highest, gold was scarcest.

What Mr. Rimington has to tell us regarding foreign exchange is laughable. When "the £1 is quoted, say, at 4.86 to the \$" (Gosh! nearly £5 to the dollar! what a come down for the British Lion!) it has nothing to do with the amount of goods each will buy in its own country. It simply means that the balance of payments is against the country whose money is at a premium. International debts (in commerce) are paid by a process of cancellation. The medium is Bills of Exchange. A in England owes B in America £100; C in America owes D in England £100. If A in England pays D in England £100 and C in America pays A in America £100, they are all square. B draws a bill on A for £100; this he sells to C, who, owing D £100, sends him the bill, and the latter presents it to A for payment upon the date of its maturity. All this is done actually through recognised agents, who buy and sell bills of exchange for a small commission. Now when payments due from England to America largely exceed those due from America to England there will not be sufficient bills on America offered to satisfy the requirements of all those requiring them to pay their debts to Americans. Clearly, then, gold will have to be sent to balance. As the cost of transporting gold has to be faced, the price of the bills advance to cover this. Should gold be very scarce in the

country where the demand for bills exceeds the supply, then anticipation of difficulty in obtaining gold will send the price of bills up higher still. That, friend Rimington, is what "foreign exchange" amounts to.

Now let's see where we stand. After the war prices were much higher than they are now. Also the rate of exchange as between England and America was much more unfavourable to England than it is now. According to Mr. Rimington this means that gold was in greater excess then than now; but according to what I have written above the reverse is indicated. Who is right? It is pretty clear that if gold had been so much in excess of demand in this country as to give us such high prices as prevailed after the war, the master class, instead of putting restrictions on its movement, would have been glad to send some of it to America, thus restoring the balance of exchange on the one hand, and lowering prices to their wage slaves on the other. The first would have meant that they could pay their debts more cheaply, and the second that they could have knocked down wages wholesale.

I have not space to deal with the other dud eggs in my critic's mare's nest, but if he is going to have another shot, he should try to be a little more careful.

A. E. JACOMB.

A LECTURE

AT

FRIARS HALL,

236, BLACKFRIARS ROAD, S.E.

ON

Sunday, December 11th, at 7.30 p.m.

SUBJECT—

Why Socialists Oppose the Second and Third Internationals.

LECTURER - A. KOHN.

ADMISSION FREE. QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

SPEAKERS TRAINING CLASS

Emily Davison Rooms,

Minerva Cafe, (Corner of) Bury Street,

HOLBORN.

Sundays, 7.30 p.m.

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Twelve Months, post free.. .. 2s. 6d.
Six Months, post free 1s. 3d.

The Socialist Standard,

DEC.,



1927

FASCISM AND THE STATE.

When we urge the supreme importance of the working class capturing Parliament, with the administrative departments and local councils which it controls, we are often met with the argument that the Fascists came to power in defiance of the then constitutionally elected Italian Government. Even if this were true it would still not necessarily follow that the overthrow of capitalism could be achieved, or could best be achieved by methods which succeeded well enough in a quite opposite object, i.e., the strengthening of the capitalist state in the interests of a section of the ruling class.

But, as we have pointed out before, the Fascist seizure of power took place not in defiance of, but with the approval and active assistance of, the democratically elected Italian Government. But for that active assistance Mussolini and his followers would have been helpless. Then, as before and since, the possession of the State machinery proved to be the deciding factor.

Our view has received interesting confirmation from three sources—the Italian Communist, Bordiga; Professor Salvemini, a Liberal; and Modigliani, of the Italian Socialist Party.

Bordiga says (*Labour Magazine*, February and March, 1923):—

After the Nitti, Giolitti, and Bonomi Governments, we had the Facta Cabinet. This type of

Government was intended to cover up the complete liberty of action of Fascism in its expansion over the whole country. During the strike in August, 1922, several conflicts took place between the workers and the Fascisti, who were openly aided by the Government. One can quote the example of Bari. During a whole week of fighting, the Fascisti in full force were unable to defeat the Bari workers, who had retired to the working-class quarters of the city, and defended themselves by armed force. The Fascisti were forced to retreat, leaving several of their number on the field. But what did the Facta Government do? During the night they surrounded the old town with thousands of soldiers and hundreds of carabinieri of the Royal Guard. In the harbour a torpedo boat trained its guns on the workers. Armoured cars and guns were brought up. The workers were taken by surprise during their sleep, the Proletarian leaders were arrested, and the Labour headquarters were occupied. This was the same throughout the country. Wherever Fascism had been beaten back by the workers the power of the State intervened; workers who resisted were shot down; workers who were guilty of nothing but self-defence were arrested and sentenced; while the magistrates systematically acquitted the Fascisti, who were generally known to have committed innumerable crimes. Thus the State was the main factor in the development of Fascism.

Professor Salvemini gives similar testimony (*Manchester Guardian*, October 19th, 1927):—

Mussolini was assisted in the civil war (1921-1922) by the money of the banks, the big industrialists and landowners. His Black-shirts were equipped with rifles, bombs, machine guns and motor lorries by the military authorities, and assured of impunity by the police and the magistracy; while their adversaries were disarmed and severely punished if they attempted resistance.

And lastly Modigliani tells us (*Daily Herald*, October 27th, 1927):—

It was by their (the Italian Cabinet's) contrivance and with the help of military forces of the State that Mussolini and his gangs were able not only to administer Castor Oil, but to murder and burn for two years. And it is in that way that they finally reached the point of the march on Rome, in face of which the King openly and personally sided with the anti-Labour onslaught.

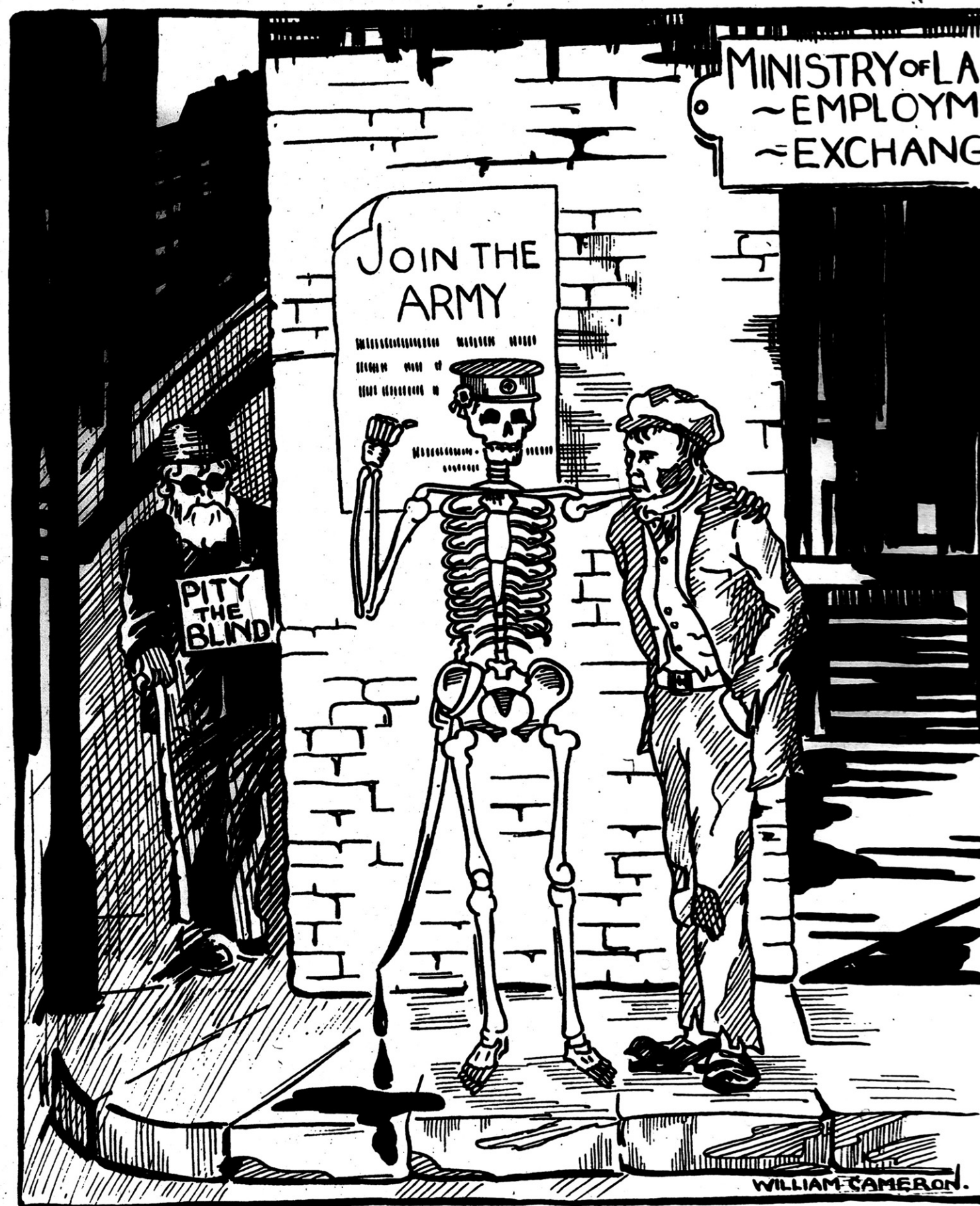
FULHAM, AWAKE!

Sympathisers of the party who are willing to join a local branch are invited to communicate with

The General Secretary,
17, Mount Pleasant,
W.C.1.

All meetings of the Socialist Party of Great Britain, including branch and executive meetings, are open to the public. We have no "secret diplomacy."

"THE RECRUITING SERGEANT."



"GENERAL STARVATION."

L. S. Amery, M.P., taking part in the Debate on Territorial Force Organisation, quoted Col. Sir Ian Hamilton as pointing out that 77 per cent. of our soldiers are compulsorily recruited by hunger and starvation. (*Hansard*, 13/3/27).

NATIONALISATION AND SOCIALISM.

Below is a letter from a correspondent, together with our reply to his numbered questions.

To the Editor, SOCIALIST STANDARD.

31/10/27.

Dear Sir,—One or two questions and remarks about "The Nationalisation Fraud" in November issue of S.S. (1) Regarding the Post Office, in which I have served. You say the workers "have no control, while the masters own." Do they not have control through their votes? (2) Does not any revenue made go to lighten the burden elsewhere? I know it is not Socialism, but it is an attempt in that direction, which is not bad considering it is surrounded by Capitalist conditions. (3) You contend nationalisation would have a "worsening effect" on workers' conditions. I do not think telephonists are worse off now than when the telephones were in the hands of the National Telephone Company.

(4) Your quotation of Ramsay MacDonald saying Nationalisation would not "get you out of your present difficulties" seems adroit, but possibly unfair. You neglect to mention to whom he was addressing his remarks. If to any particular body such as teachers, miners, or bakers it seems a perfectly legitimate statement to make. Nationalisation will not solve all difficulties when applied piecemeal, with the rest of society under capitalist methods of administration, but the trouble is that capitalism has put all our civil activities in such a slender balance that any sudden disturbance such as Socialism in a night would probably cause great distress at the outset, which would put back its realisation for a century. I am not in the councils of Labour, but it seems to me that they choose to attempt things gradually. (5) I know the lower grades in the Civil Service were sore because the millennium did not arrive with the Labour Government, but badly off as they are, there were many other workers in worse parlance, and it was to the condition of the latter that Labour gave prior consideration, viz., O.A.P. Act, 1924, which removed means enquiries. Wheatley housing bill. Not Socialism I know, but an effort in that direction.

(6) I imagine much of this will be read with impatience by you, but the fact remains, the electorate are not Socialist yet. The Labour party is a sign that they are turning that way. I say nothing of their leaders, but few things worth having come suddenly. The few successes, the failures and hard lessons learned it is to be hoped will turn the electorate by steps to Socialism.

(7) One more question, and a request. The S.P.G.B. write some very trenchant criticism of all parties in the S.S. This is comparatively easy, and with much of it hosts of people will agree. You publish a "Declaration of Principles," but assume for a moment The Socialist Party in power with a majority in the Commons will you please indicate what steps it would take to put these principles into practice, and sketch a picture of the state of society after the first twelve months' administration. There are many snags

in putting principles into practice, and some idea of how you would start should prove interesting and instructive to your readers.—Yours faithfully,
G. E. WRIGHT.

(1) The workers at present vote Capitalist agents into control of the machinery of Government, thus placing control in the hands of the Capitalist class. We urge them to use their votes to place themselves in control of the machinery of Government.

(2) Yes, the Post Office surplus goes to relieve the Capitalist class of part of their burden of taxation. We fail to see how this is a step towards Socialism. Perhaps our correspondent will enlighten us.

(3) We do not believe, and did not say, that the State pays lower wages than outside industry. As was pointed out in the recent Post Office award of the Civil Service Arbitration Court, Civil Service wages are based on the wages and conditions in industry generally. The "worsening effect" referred to the greater dependency and more restricted position of the State employee who has only one potential employer, as compared with the outside worker who at least has some slight choice. We do not, however, suggest that the difference is great; all are wage-slaves.

(4) If Nationalisation will not solve present difficulties, and since it is not a step towards Socialism, we fail to see why the workers should support it.

(5) To know that there are other workers in a still worse condition may be a slight comfort to "lower grades in the Civil Service," but it is unfortunately considerably outweighed by the knowledge that there are others, non-workers, who are considerably better off. The Wheatley Housing Bill, according to our correspondent, was "an effort" in the direction of Socialism. Mr. Wheatley, who presumably ought to know, declared in the House of Commons that his Bill was an attempt to "patch up Capitalism."

(6) It is in order to convert the electorate to Socialism that we preach Socialism instead of preaching the reform of Capitalism.

(7) Our correspondent shows by this last question that he has a fundamental misunderstanding of our aims. He writes as if we of the Socialist Party were offering to solve the problems of the workers if placed in power, and asking for our work to be judged after twelve months. Our reply is,

that when the working class want to abolish the private ownership of the means of production and the right of any individual to live by owning, they will instruct their delegates to take whatever steps they (the working class) decide upon in the light of then existing conditions. Not knowing the time or the circumstances or the possibilities of resistance by the Capitalist minority, we obviously cannot say what precisely those steps will be, nor what progress will have been made in re-organising the basis of society in twelve months. ED. COM.

SOCIALISM AND THE "SUPERMEN." A CRITICISM AND OUR REPLY.

The Editor of the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Sir,—When reading socialist literature I do not disagree with its claims that capitalism is based upon exploitation. But surely this does not constitute an exception? It seems to me that all life is one immensity of desire to exploit and attain power and supremacy. Even in the obedience of the slave there is the ceaseless desire to take advantage of any weakness in the master. There is no equality or desire for equality to be found in alert and healthy organisms. But there is youth and decay, triumph and death. And it is when failing powers, frustration and consequently misery are paramount that the sentient creature begins to doubt the wisdom of the warlike nature of existence. It is in this condition that we get the following conceptions: (1) That robbery and exploitation are abominable; (2) that equality is desirable; (3) that one should sacrifice for one's neighbour; (4) that the base have been chosen to bring to naught the things that are; (5) that in the order of social evolution the emancipation of the slaves will involve the emancipation of all mankind; (6) that all souls are equal before God. Some of these are to be found in Christianity, others in Socialism. It appears to me that there is not a great deal of difference between either, allowing for phraseology and the periods when written. I contend that they are both emanations arising from revolting and submerged peoples or classes who have found means to present their case as if their conceptions and values of existence were worthy objects for all. Thus the vanquished can teach that the highest goodness is to sacrifice for one's neighbour. This, if successful, would act powerfully in their favour. Or they could teach that democracy and equality are involved in the order of social evolution, and interpret history to that end. Both are ruses of the vanquished designed to turn the tide in their behalf. And both have met with partial success.

For instance there is that phenomena the Christian capitalist, who is a monster of contradiction and falsehood, whose very existence depends upon a mode of conduct that is anti-Christian as well as anti-Socialist. But he is yet Christian enough to will vast sums to succour the miserable and unfortunate of life, he has a conscience that way; and English philanthropy is perhaps one of the most amazing spectacles in

existence. Further, he is democratic enough to enfranchise vast numbers of slaves, etc. That which separates me from Christian, Socialist and modern ideas is that they are wholly or in part attempts to exercise a paralysing effect upon enterprising and thoughtful men under cover of the lie of equality, and they hold up the ideas emanating from decline, envy, resentment and decay as the goal of human well-being and goodness.

The object of the Socialist Party is in opposition to the natural desires of extraordinary men, for they wish to further their ideas regardless of the indifferent and conforming multitude. But Socialism would have it that they must, before embarking on new ideas and therefore on new actions, consult by democratic means the opinion of the majority who are inhospitable to ideas, suspicious of anyone who is different, and who cling tenaciously to a few simple superstitions, hates, aversions and longings—most of them idiotic, and all of them coarse, blunt, cowish and stupid.

I am convinced that new civilisations proceed from the higher levels of the race. They are the work of men of exceptional energy, powers of thought and audacity. Both Socialism and Christianity are attempts to paralyse the free play of these men by means of the belief that the low, the ordinary and wretched have something sacred or worthy in them. At their best they are useful, and cannot be more than that. Socialism is the unification of the belief in the greatest good of the greatest number, government of the people by the people for the people, and similar products "in the interest of the whole community" emanating from mob and slave ideas. I claim that these ideas are opposed to the development of higher men, and therefore of a higher race, which can only proceed from its exceptional individuals who should be above responsibility to the general mass of ordinary men. And if among Socialists there happen to be working men of profound intellectual perceptions, they are surely jumping out of the frying pan into the fire in elevating the common man by means of revolt from below and equal rights for all.—I am, Yours, etc.,

ROBERT HART.

REPLY TO MR. HART.

Mr. Hart's letter consists almost entirely of baseless assumptions for which he does not attempt to give the slightest evidence.

For instance, he uses the term "equality" on several occasions without defining it, and then tries to fix his term on us. In view of our published attitude in our pamphlet, "Socialism and Religion," Mr. Hart's claim that we differ little with the statement that "all souls are equal before God," is not merely absurd, it is a direct misrepresentation. Moreover, we do not say that "the emancipation of the slave will involve the emancipation of all mankind," but that the emancipation of the working class will involve this. The modern working class is

a slave class, but it is only one in an historical series. What distinguishes it from previous slave classes in this connection is the fact that it is the last class in the series and there is no class below it. Hence its emancipation must mean the emancipation of humanity as a whole.

Neither does the Socialist talk about or advocate "sacrifice for one's neighbour." On the contrary, we distinctly point out that it is to the *interest* of each member of the working class to do his or her share in bringing about Socialism.

Mr. Hart's ignorance of even elementary history is shown in his statement that "English philanthropy is perhaps one of the most amazing spectacles in existence." At base English philanthropy is no different from any other philanthropy, ancient or modern. The sort of philanthropy Mr. Hart mentions has its roots either in a fear of a hereafter, the belief in a heaven or a hell, or else in a desire to achieve notoriety or fame. There is nothing "amazing" about this.

When Mr. Hart says the object of the Socialist Party is in opposition to the natural (!) desires of extraordinary men, he merely shows his ignorance of Socialism. Unless the men desire to be "extraordinary" thieves and murderers, there is nothing in Socialism to prevent them furthering their ideas unless this furtherance is to the injury of the community. To-day, so beloved by Mr. Hart, these people can only "further their ideas" if such ideas suit the ruling class. If they do not suit this class, the ideas are crushed at birth.

Mr. Hart summarises his views in the last paragraph of his letter when he says "new civilisations proceed from the higher levels of the race." What are the "higher levels"? He does not say. Further on we are told that higher development "can only proceed from exceptional individuals who should be above responsibility to the general mass of ordinary men." How charming! But are these "exceptional individuals" also going to "be above" using the services and abilities of this mass? If not—if, as happens to be the fact, they are utterly dependent upon these abilities of the "general mass," even for their existence, then on what ground does Mr. Hart claim that the "exceptional individuals" should be above responsibility to those on whom they depend?

Apparently Mr. Hart has been reading some defender of Capitalist robbery, like Mr. Mallock, who argued that the Capitalist was entitled to the wealth he stole from the workers, because of his (the Capitalist's) "exceptional abilities." If—and when—Mr. Hart cares to give a little time to the study of historical development, he will find that "new civilisations" proceed from the changes in the material conditions of existence. That this development is due, not to the "higher levels of the race," but to growth and changes in the instruments of production and distribution. When these changes reach a stage where they become fettered and hampered by the then system of Society, a struggle ensues between the class interested in the new forms of production, and the class wishing to retain the old system of Society. From the point of view of social status, the class interested in the new forms is always a "lower" class, but from the wider point of view of social evolution, it is a "higher" class because it is endeavouring to establish a more developed, and therefore a "higher" system of Society. But these terms "higher" and "lower" are the cant and humbug of a ruling class and its dupes, who use them to try and hide the truth from their victims. Socialism is the next stage in the order of social evolution, and when the growing knowledge of the working class in the truth of our case is extended over a majority of that class, they will take the necessary steps to establish that system despite all the squeals of the "exceptional individuals" who may try to sweep back the ocean with a broom. ED. COM.

BETHNAL GREEN.

COME TO

A LECTURE

AT

Bethnal Green Library, Cambridge Rd., E.

ON

Dec. 9th and also on Dec. 16th, at 7.30 p.m.

JANUARY 1st.

A LECTURE ON SOCIALISM

AT

Friars Hall, Blackfriars Road, S.E.

7.30 p.m.

Admission Free.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION.

SOME QUESTIONS ON SOCIALIST POLICY.

A CORRESPONDENT ANSWERED.

We give below a letter from "Student" and our replies to his four questions:—

Oct. 6th, 1927.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain,
17, Mount Pleasant,
London, W.C.1.

Dear Comrades,—I am in agreement and have been for a number of years with the Object and Principles of the S.P.G.B., and have been preaching same, yet I must say that I do not agree with actions, statements, and attitude of certain members of the S.P.G.B. which I, like many others, maintain are detrimental to progress to the object of Socialism as stated by the S.P.G.B. I write to ascertain from you your answer to the following questions:—

- (1) If a person believe there to be a Supreme Being or Living God; or believe in the statements supposed to have been made by the supposed Christ, would such a person be allowed to join or remain a member of the S.P.G.B.?
- (2) If a person be a member, an active member, of a local unemployed organisation, originated and supported by members of the Tory Party and Fascists, would such person be allowed to join or remain a member of the S.P.G.B.?
- (3) Is there in your opinion an organisation which does function that is strictly Non-Political: whether it does state so or not?
- (4) Would you say that nationalisation is, or is not, a step in the right direction toward Socialism?

Thanking you in anticipation for your reply through the "Standard" or otherwise.—Yours fraternally,
A STUDENT.

REPLY.

(1) Applicants for membership of the Socialist Party are required to demonstrate only that they accept our Declaration of Principles and will adhere to our rules (except, of course, that they must show that they understand what they are signing). But acceptance of Socialism involves acceptance of certain views as to the evolution of society; there is, therefore, no place in our ranks for those whose "beliefs" prevent them from working confidently for the establishment of Socialism. Belief in a "Supreme Being" possessing and using the power to mould men and things arbitrarily to a "Divine Will" cuts across our scientific view of the necessity of moulding society ourselves in accordance with our definite views of working-class interests. To show that this is not an exaggerated precaution, we need only consider an amazing document which bears the signature of

A. J. Cook, Ben Tillett, George Lansbury, R. Coppock and others. This is the Proclamation of the Industrial Christian Fellowship, issued on April 25th, 1926, for the celebration of "Industrial Sunday."

The signatories declare that:

"In attaching our names to this manifesto of the Industrial Christian Fellowship, we proclaim our belief in the Gospel of Christ as the final truth concerning the relationship of men one with another. It is our conviction that statesmanship will fail, and political programmes will prove futile as a solvent of social troubles, unless they embody the spirit and practice of Christ."

There is much more of this kind of stuff, including an appeal "to our fellow-citizens of all classes" to remedy the evils of the modern world.

Now we offer membership to those who accept our solution of the economic problem of the working class; we cannot offer it to those who pin their faith to Christ, or the "Christian spirit," or the works of a "Supreme Being," and who by so doing explicitly or implicitly reject all "political programmes," including our own. Neither we nor they would benefit from the encouragement such a course would give to the confusion of a double and conflicting allegiance.

(2) and (3) We cannot answer such a question without particulars of the organisation referred to. Members are frequently compelled, in order to work at their trade, to join trade unions founded and dominated by liberals, labourites, and other anti-socialists. We can only say in general that members may not belong to other political parties. Whether a particular organisation is political, or whether for other reasons we consider it undesirable for members to join it, must be decided on the merits of each case.

(4) Nationalisation, or State Capitalism, in this country is emphatically not a step in the right direction. In a backward country like Russia, faced with the need to go through Capitalism before Socialism is a practical possibility, State Capitalism may be a step in the right direction, in that it may hasten capitalist development and enable it to proceed without certain of the worst excesses which competitive capitalism exhibited in this country in the early days.

ED. COMM.

HULL BRANCH.

At a time when very encouraging progress can be recorded in the London area we are reminded of the special obstacles which face the more isolated provincial branches. After a very promising start the Hull Branch is for the moment carrying on under difficulties owing to the forced temporary suspension of activities by a number of active members. A special appeal is therefore made to members and sympathisers in Hull to come to the assistance of the branch and make the winter season a time of useful preparatory work for next season. To the fullest extent permitted by our resources we in London are, of course, at all times willing to assist provincial branches to carry on propaganda, but it is more important still that members should set about the task of fitting themselves for active work as speakers, writers, literature sellers, etc. It should further be the aim of every member to make use of the branch to extend his knowledge of Socialist theory and of the facts of working class history.

You are therefore particularly requested to turn up at the next branch meeting in order to perfect the organisation of branch activities and help to extend the party's influence in Hull.

PARTY ACTIVITIES.

A well-attended debate took place with the Battersea Conservatives at the Town Hall on October 9th, when Comrade Fitzgerald easily disposed of the "arguments" of his opponent. Sales of literature and collection were good. Another debate took place at Stratford Town Hall with the Economic League on November 13th. Comrade Hardy took up every point of Major Gillespie and showed the emptiness of the Capitalist case.

Battersea (Lower) Town Hall was filled at the lecture on November 6th on "Socialism and Dictatorship," and the questions and opposition of Communists and others were well dealt with.

A good attendance was made at Friars Hall on November 20th, at Comrade Fitzgerald's lecture on "Anti-Parliamentarism." The case for political action was amply stated, to the discomfiture of our critics. Lectures at Bethnal Green Library and the Engineers' Institute, Stratford, have also been carried on.

Some future lectures are announced in this issue.

HERO WORSHIP.**A Conversation with a Visitor from Mars.**

(continued from last month.)

"However, Marty, I think Wells hits the right nail on the head when he explains Napoleon's amazing popularity with his troops by the fact that they never saw him save on a few theatrical and emotional occasions, and that his soldiers idolised not Napoleon, but 'a carefully fostered legend of a little pet of a man, who was devoted to France and to them all.' Napoleon, it seems to me, was both 'the child of the Revolution' and the embodiment of the reaction against it. Society in the 18th and 19th century was crying aloud for 'reform,' but was not ready for a system of society based on common ownership. Napoleon represents the rejection of the theories of Anacharsis Cloots and the beginnings of the Capitalistic State; whilst the French bank, the University and the 'Code Napoleon' were the result not so much of his 'original genius,' as of the evident social and economic need for them."

"There must have been, I suppose, in your planet's history," remarked the Martian, "many 'great men' who have attempted to change the course of social or economic development. Have any succeeded?" "Well," I replied, "I do not know of any individual who has changed the course, but a few have stemmed it for a while. In Roman history, Sulla attempted to re-establish the lost power of the Senate and to crush the rising Equestrian order, which consisted of wealthy traders. To effect this he framed a constitution. In a few years, however, his constitution was practically disregarded, and all that remained of his labours were his administrative and judicial reforms, which, although secondary considerations with Sulla, yet satisfied the social need for better organisation, and thus endured. Strangely enough, Marty, a comic-operative 'Sulla,' is operating in Rome to-day, and with the puffed-up pride of mediocrity fondly hopes to achieve the success denied to his more illustrious predecessor. How truly Marx interpreted history when he wrote, 'Great historical facts and personages appear twice—once as tragedy and again as farce.'"

Many more examples, however, could be given, Marty, of men whose desire and aims have been thwarted by economic conditions,

*18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon.

but time prevents me from doing anything save naming a few, such as Cromwell, Charles XII of Sweden, and (possibly) Lenin of Russia. Spencer has ably summarised the conclusions just arrived at in his essay, "The Social Organism," portions of which, with your permission, I will "inflict" upon you:—

"It is not by the 'hero as king' any more than by collective wisdom that men have been segregated into producers, wholesale distributors, and retail distributors. The whole of our industrial organisation, from its main outlines down to its minutest details has become what it is not simply without legislative guidance but, to a considerable extent in spite of legislative hindrances. . . . By steps so small that year after year the industrial arrangements have seemed to men just what they were before—by changes as insensible as those through which a seed passes into a tree; society has become the complex body of mutually-dependent workers we now see. . . . The failure of Cromwell permanently to establish a new social condition and the rapid revival of suppressed institutions and practices after his death show how powerless is a monarch to change the type of a society he governs. He may disturb, he may retard, or he may aid the natural process of organisation; but the general course of this process is beyond his control. . . . Thus, that which is obviously true of the industrial structure of society, is true of its whole structure. The fact that constitutions are not made but grow is simply a fragment of the much larger fact that under all its aspects and through all its ramifications, society is a growth, and not a manufacture."

"Well," said the Martian, I have learned a great deal from your discourse; in the first place my conviction that human societies are not jig-saw puzzles, the parts of which have been contributed by 'great men,' but are living and ever-changing organisms in which both 'great' and 'little' men play their respective parts, has been doubly strengthened, whilst it seems evident that 'hero worship' varies in its form and function according to the state of the community in which it exists. Thus, I gather that, early man was too self-occupied and practical to be carried away by

sentimental personal idolatry, and individual control was sanctioned simply because it was the only positive control known. Later, with the evolution of abstract ideas and ideals, moral civilization came into being with the resultant glamour that attached itself to the governing members of society. In the past, my friend, 'hero worship' seemed to have fulfilled at least one useful purpose—it provided a control over what would be, I assume (compared with your present machines for mass production), crude and strangely miscellaneous instruments of production; that is to say, society, fearing anarchy, submitted to the subordination of efficient individuals. But what of the utility of 'hero worship' at the present time?"

(To be continued.) W. J.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Truthseeker (Hanley).—We note your reference to the local Labour M.P., Mr. MacLaren's continual advocacy of taxation of landowners, but as we recently dealt with the matter in this journal cannot give more space to this threadbare capitalist reform.

Denmark, the choice example of the land taxer's paradise, is, as you rightly state, a country of increasing unemployment.

E. Wright.—Your letter advocating money reform covers points already recently dealt with in S.S., and we cannot therefore deal with the matter again at present.

F. S. Harvey (Wandsworth).—Your letter about the "Slave of the Farm" will be dealt with in next issue.

NEW PUBLICATIONS FUND.

Contributions to this fund are earnestly invited to assist us with the expense of publishing more literature.

NOTICE.

PAMPHLET—

"Economic Causes of War"
SOLD OUT.

S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS**LONDON DISTRICT.**

Sundays: Highbury Corner, 11.15 a.m.
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.
Victoria Park, 4 p.m.
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.
Paddington, Prince of Wales, 11.30 a.m.
Bethnal Green, opposite Salmon and Ball, 7.30 p.m.

Mondays: Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.
Becontree, Burnside Road, and Green Lanes, 8 p.m.

Wednesdays: Hackney, Paragon Rd. and Mare St. 8 p.m.

Fridays: Clerkenwell, Almeida St., Upper St., N., 8 p.m.
West Ham, Water Lane 8 p.m.
Leyton, James Lane, High Road, 8 p.m.

HANLEY BRANCH MEETINGS.

Sundays: Hanley, Market Square, 7 p.m.
Burslem, St. John's Square, 7 p.m.

BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury-road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.
- BECONTREE.**—Sec., S. Cash, 32, Greenway. Public invited.
- BETHNAL GREEN.**—Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m., at 2, Co-operative Buildings, 361, Bethnal Green-rd., E.2. Sec., D. Jacobs, at above address.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec. E. Jesper, 36, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.
- CAMBERWELL.**—Sec., J. Goodfellow, 40, Solon New Road, Clapham, S.W.4. Branch meets at Camberwell Trades Council Room, 6A, Artichoke Place, Camberwell Green, every Friday at 8 p.m. Discussions—public invited.
- CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Sec., at above address.
- EAST LONDON.**—Sec., A. Jacobs, 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.
- EAST HAM.**—Branch meets at 1, Tyrone-road, East Ham. Wednesdays at 8 p.m. Communications. Sec. at above address.
- EDINBURGH.**—Sec., 15, Barclay-place, Edinburgh.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Saturdays, 7 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare-street, Hackney. Branch Business 1st and 3rd Saturdays. Discussions 2nd and 4th Saturdays. Sec. at above address.
- HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock St., Hanley, Staffs.
- HULL.**—Branch meetings, Tuesday, at 8 p.m., at the Trade and Labour Club (Jarratt-street entrance). Discussion after meeting. All readers in Hull requested to attend.
- ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sister-rd., Holloway, N. Sec., M. Baker, 18, Orpingley-rd., N.7.
- LEYTON.**—Sec., A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.
- MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park-street, Salford, Manchester. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 7.45 p.m., at 114, Duke St., Stretford-road.
- PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd and 4th Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn-lane, W.9 (side door).
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5 Welling-ton-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- TOOTING.**—Sec., 15, University-road, Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt-lane, S.W. 17.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary 22, Dunloe-ave., N.15. Branch meets Fridays, 51, Blackstock Road, Finsbury Park, N. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

WATFORD.—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

WEST HAM.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.